

THE
PRACTICAL EXPOSITOR:

OR, AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT,

IN THE FORM OF A
PARAPHRASE;
WITH OCCASIONAL NOTES IN THEIR PROPER PLACES
FOR FURTHER EXPLICATION,

AND
SERIOUS RECOLLECTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF EVERY CHAPTER.
TO WHICH IS ADDED,
AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL THINGS CONTAINED
IN THE PARAPHRASE, ESPECIALLY IN THE NOTES.

For the Use of the FAMILY and CLOSET.

By JOHN GUYSE, D. D.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

VOL. V.

CONTAINING
PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS,
THESSALONIANS, TIMOTHY, TITUS,
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THE LIFE OF THE FATHER

BY JOHN G. GAY, D.D.

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CONTAINING

PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS, THESSALONIANS, TIMOTHY, TITUS, PHILEMON, AND THE HEBREWS, THE GENERAL EPISTLES OF JAMES, PETER, JOHN, AND JUDE; AND THE REVELATION OF ST JOHN THE DIVINE.

IT is with wonder, blessing, and praise, that I humbly adore the God of providence and grace for his preservation and assistances, unto the finishing of my design on the New Testament; especially when I reflect, that several much more eminent servants of the blessed Jesus, and less advanced in years, have been cut off in the midst of their labours of this kind. And I gratefully acknowledge the obligations my Christian friends and brethren have heaped upon me, by their candid acceptance of the *former volumes*, and repeated desires to see the Work completed in *two more*; and by their generous encouragement to them, when they were advertised, as going to the press, though no proposals were published for a subscription.

THERE needs, I think, no further *prefatory addition*, than to refer my readers to what has been prefixed to the other volumes; and importunately to solicit their earnest prayers, that the God of all grace, through the atoning blood of the dear Redeemer, would abundantly pardon the many imperfections, which,

which, I am sensible, attend these poor performances; and that he would follow the whole with a special blessing, for rendering it subservient to the glorious cause of evangelical truth, and holiness, and Christian charity; for leading some ignorant, irreligious, and erroneous souls into the only true way of salvation according to the gospel; and for helping them and others onward therein to eternal life, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

THESE, I humbly trust, have been, and are my governing aims in this, and all my other ministerial services; and if these, through divine influence, may in any measure be attained, I therein do, and will rejoice, and ascribe the entire glory of all to the God of my life, mercies, and hopes: This will give me the noblest satisfaction, and maintain the peace of my own mind, whatever censures sceptical, profane, or severe critics may pass upon the present attempt; or upon its Author, who counts it his honour to be a sincere lover of the doctrines of grace, and of pure and undefiled religion, and immortal souls, though a very unworthy servant of Jesus Christ,

JOHN GUYSE.

LONDON,
Sept. 29, 1752. }

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A PRACTICAL
EXPOSITION
OF THE
APOSTLE PAUL'S EPISTLE
TO THE
PHILIPPIANS,
IN THE FORM OF A
PARAPHRASE.

THE PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

PHILIPPI was a considerable city of *Macedonia*, and the first city of that province, with regard to its situation in the way from *Thrace* to *Macedonia*. (See the note on *Acts* xvi. 11, 12.) It was called *Philippi* from *Philip* of *Macedon*, the father of *Alexander* the Great, who enlarged and fortified it, and gave it that name. And it was famous for the battles that were afterward fought in its neighbouring fields, between *Augustus* and *Mark Anthony* on one side, and *Brutus* and *Cassius* on the other, in which the former were victorious.

The apostle *Paul* was called by a vision to preach the gospel at this city; and God succeeded his labours there to the conversion of *Lydia* and the jailor; (*Acts* xvi.) and in process of time, many others, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were brought over to the faith of Christ, insomuch that a famous church was erected, and completely furnished with proper officers, relating to its spiritual and temporal concerns. (*Chap.* i. 1.)

The apostle visited them afterwards again, (*Acts* xx. 1,—6.) who had a mighty affection for him, and he for them; and, in their abundant love to him, they distinguished themselves, above all other churches, by sending seasonable and liberal supplies for his maintenance, when he was at *Thessalonica*; and now again, while he was a prisoner at *Rome*; from whence, about the year of our Lord, say some 60, say others 63, he sent this Epistle to them by the hand of *Epaphroditus*, by whom he had received their generous contributions, together with an account of their tender concern at the troubles that had befallen him, and of their continuing stedfastly in the doctrine of the gospel, notwithstanding the attempts of some *Judaizers* among them, to divide and seduce them; and the chief design of his epistle was to fortify them still further against these seducers,

2 The PREFACE to the Epistle to the PHILIPPIANS.

and encourage them to abide in the faith of Christ, notwithstanding all opposition.

Accordingly he begins his Epistle with hearty thanksgivings to God for the eminent grace bestowed upon them, and for their affectionate regards to himself; expresses his ardent love to them, and great satisfaction in them; and assures them, that his bonds were over-ruled for the furtherance of the gospel; that he was calm and comfortable under them, and was confident, that in a little time he should be released from them, as it proved in the event; and so encourages them to be easy as to him, and to bear up with Christian fortitude under the sufferings which they themselves endured for the sake of Christ and the gospel, *chap. i.* He exhorts them to love and union, public-spiritedness and lowliness of mind, which he recommends to them, by the matchless and surprising example of Christ's humbling himself; and hopes to send *Timothy*, and to come afterwards himself to help them still further in their spiritual affairs, *chap. ii.* Encourages their holy joy in Christ; cautions them against the attempts of *judaizers*, with whom he compares himself, and shews the happy change that was made upon him by divine grace, and the principles and views, with which he acted in opposition to theirs; and which he proposes to the imitation of the *Philippians*, *chap. iii.* And closes the Epistle with expressions of great tenderness toward them, and toward some particular persons among them, with exhortations to several religious and moral duties, with repeated grateful acknowledgments of their favours to him, and with a doxology, salutations, and his usual benediction, *chap. iv.*

CHAP.

C H A P. I.

The apostle Paul inscribes this Epistle to the church and its officers at Philippi, in the salutation of whom Timothy joins with him, ver. 1, 2. Offers up thanksgivings and prayers to God for them, on account of the good work of grace which he was satisfied would be perfected, as in the judgment of charity, and fervour of his love, he hoped this concerning them all. 3,—7. He expresses his affection to them, and pours out an excellent prayer for them, 8,—12. Fortifies them against dejection at his sufferings, which turned to good account, in exciting others to preach Christ, 13,—20. Tells them that he stood prepared for glorifying Christ by life, or death, 21,—26. And exhorts them to all holy conversation, zeal, and constancy in the profession of the gospel, notwithstanding all the opposition of their adversaries, 27,—30.

TEXT.

PAUL and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

2 Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL, and Timothy, who concurs with him in affection, and approbation of what he writes, (see the note on 1 Cor. i. 1.) as being joint-servants of Jesus Christ, to minister his gospel, and promote his kingdom and glory; we cordially unite in this address to the church of Christ, which ordinarily meets, as the seat of all ordinances at *Philippi*, and consists of visibly, and we trust of really, sanctified persons, (*ver. 7.*) through vital union with, and influence from Jesus Christ, the head of the body: And as ye are a completely organized church, furnished with proper officers; with pastors to inspect, preside, and watch over your souls, and your spiritual concerns, and to feed you with knowledge and understanding*; and with deacons to take care of your temporal affairs, and especially of your poor, (*Acts vi. 1,—6.*) according to the order of the gospel, we include these, together with the private members, in what follows, as may be applicable to them respectively; and particularly do so in our most solemn wishes, that the divine favour, with all its distinguishing effects, and every kind of prosperity, especially in what relates to your souls, may abound toward you from God, our covenant-God and Father, as the spring and fountain of all grace, and from the anointed

N O T E.

* *Bishops or overseers* (*ἐπίσκοποι*) is of the same import with, and promiscuously used for *elders* or *pastors* of particular churches, as appears from *Acts xx. 17, 28. Tit. i. 5,—9. and 1 Pet. v. 1, 2.*: And *bishops* or *elders*, and *deacons*, as far as appears from scripture and primitive antiquity, were the only different

orders of officers in the apostolical churches, though in some of them, occasions so requiring, as in this church at *Philippi*, there were more than one pastor in a church. (See the sermon at the ordination of Mr. Thomas Gibbons, Oct. 27. 1743.)

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 (Always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy)

5 For your fellowship in the gospel, from the first day until now :

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ :

anointed Lord and Saviour, as the purchaser and distributor of all its blessings to you, as well as to us.

3 My soul is filled with thanksgiving and praise to God, whose I am, and whom I serve, and who put me into the ministry, and made me instrumental to your conversion. I cannot but bless his holy name, from the bottom of my heart, as often as I think of you, and of what God has done for, and by you.

4, 5 I find myself sweetly constrained to make mention of you all, in every stated and solemn address to God, through the great Mediator, presenting my earnest and fervent supplications at the throne of grace, for every one of you, with abundance of pleasure, together with the most cheerful thanksgivings, (ver. 3.) for your admission, through faith, unto all the rich and glorious privileges, promises, hopes, and enjoyments of the gospel-state; and for your communion with God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, and one with another; as also for your readily communicating to the support of the gospel, and particularly to me in all my sufferings for its sake; and for your continuing, with steadfastness and perseverance, in all these excellent things, from the day of your conversion, to this very time, notwithstanding all the opposition of your enemies, and the persecutions ye have endured. (ver. 28, 29, 30.) And my joy, on this account, greatly abounds;

6 Being certainly assured, from the testimony of God in his word, from the immortal nature of the seed of grace, from the unchangeableness of his love and his covenant, and from the merit of the dear Redeemer, and the indwelling of his Spirit, that God, who, in the riches of his free favour, has begun to work the best of all works in you*, even the work of faith, and of heart-changing grace, whereby ye are brought

N O T E.

* A good work is referred by some to their liberality to the apostle; but that was a good work done by them, rather than begun by the operation of God in them; and it seems too mercenary and selfish, for one of the apostle's generous and disinterested spirit, to express such wonderful joy and thankfulness merely, or chiefly on that account; and, in the foregoing verse, he had spoke of their fellowship in the gospel, as the matter of this joy and praise, with reference to which, he speaks of his being confident, that he, who had begun this good work, would perform or finish it, (ἐκτελείου) until the day of Jesus Christ. I therefore take it to signify the good work of faith, or of grace in the whole compals

of it, which God had wrought in them: And, as such a comprehensive interpretation gives us the best idea of the apostle's joy and praise on their behalf; so it makes his sentiments more useful and applicable to the church in all ages, than to confine it to the particular circumstance of liberality in the *Philippians* towards him. The extremely limited sense that some expositors affect to give of this, and many other passages of the New Testament, apparently narrows the rule of faith and practice, and the comfort of the scriptures in their reference to us, as if they were not of such standing and extensive use, as I am persuaded the Spirit of God designed them to be.

brought into the fellowship of the gospel, (*ver. 5.*) will, undoubtedly, in his faithfulness carry on, maintain, and increase it, by his almighty power, all the days of your lives, till he shall perfect or finish it, at the great day of Christ's coming to *be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.* (2 Thef. i. 10.) I am fully satisfied of this important point, with regard to every one that hath received the grace of God in truth.

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, in as much as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace,

7 And, as ye have already made such a credible and honourable profession of Christ, and so stedfastly abode in it, and given such evident proofs of your sincerity therein hitherto, I am bound in the judgment of charity, and it is highly reasonable, and becoming me, to suppose, that this good work is really begun in the whole church: And, I am the rather inclined to entertain this charitable hope concerning you all; because, as love thinks no evil, but *hopes all things*, (1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.) ye are exceeding dear to me, and lie much upon my heart, in my addresses to God on your behalf; forasmuch as ye manifestly appear to be partakers of the same saving grace with myself, and have discovered it in your patiently enduring tribulations, as I myself do, and in your Christian sympathy with me, and concurrent assistances, both in the imprisonment I now suffer for the cause of Christ, and in all my labours for the defence of the gospel, against the cavils of its adversaries, and for the confirmation of it, by word and deed, to the confutation of them, and establishment of the saints.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all, in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

8 For I can appeal to God, who knows my heart, that I am exceedingly desirous of the spiritual and eternal welfare of every one of you; and that I even long, if it be his will, to see you all again, that I may be instrumental, in his hand, of still further helping forward his good work in you: And he is witness that my ardent desire for, and after you, is not merely from human gratitude, on account of your benevolence to me, or from any carnal or worldly considerations whatsoever; but that it is chiefly of a spiritual nature, for the sake of Christ; because I look upon you as his members, dear to him; and am moved with the inmost bowels of melting affection toward you, under a sense, and in imitation of his tenderest love and pity, wherein he laid down his life, that ye might be saved.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in

9 And, in the fervor of my affection for you, I earnestly beg of God, that your love to him, and his Son, to me and his people, word and ways, which dwells in you, and already works, and has eminently shown itself in you, as it ought in every church-member,

in knowledge, and
in all judgment;

10 That ye may
approve things that
are excellent; that
ye may be sincere,
and without of-
fence till the day
of Christ;

11 Being filled
with the fruits
of righteousness,
which are by Je-
sus Christ unto the
glory and praise of
God.

12 But I would
ye should under-
stand, brethren,
that

ber, may still more abound and increase with, and under the government of, growing knowledge and experience, as being led into the doctrine of Christ, and settled, after the best manner, in your judgment and spiritual sense, (*ἡ πᾶσι αἰσθησι*) as to the whole of its system;

10 That ye may carefully examine, try, and prove, (*ὡς το δοκιμαζον*) and thereupon discern and approve the things that differ in themselves, by way of preference to all others; and that differ in my preaching from what is delivered by false teachers, and, upon trial, prove themselves to be truly valuable and important; that so ye may be found to be genuine Christians, pure in heart and life, free from all hypocrisy and deceit in your holy profession, and uncorrupted in your principles and designs, temper and behaviour, when judged of in the light of the word of God, and tried by that infallible standard of truth and holiness*; and may have a conscience void of offence toward God and man, and be preserved from every thing, that might wound your own spirits, or be an occasion of stumbling, or falling, to yourselves or others; and *that* not only at certain times, now and then, but with constancy and perseverance all your lives long, as those that expect an awful day of account, and till Christ shall come to judge the world, that ye may be approved of him, as sincere and eminent believers then;

11 Being all along, and found at that day to be, *trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that be may be glorified*; (Isa. lxi. 3.) even such as, like trees richly laden, greatly abound in the most precious fruits of holiness and obedience of every kind, in their season, (Psal. i. 3.) which are right and equitable in themselves, and due from you, according to the just and holy requirements of the moral law, that unchangeable rule of all righteousness; and which are produced by virtue derived from Christ, (John xv. 5.) and are acceptable to God, and turn to his honour and glory, in and through this great Mediator, (1 Pet. ii. 5. and iv. 11.) which is the supreme end to be aimed at in them all.

12 But, that ye may not be terrified or discouraged at my sufferings for the sake of Christ, I would fain have you know and consider, my dearly beloved brethren,

N O T E.

* *Sincere* (*εὐκρινος*) is a metaphor, taken either from things that are clarified by the heat, or examined and judged of by the light of the sun-beams; and so are found, upon the strictest trial,

to be pure and incorrupt: And *without offence*, (*ἀπεροκνητοι*) is a metaphor, taken from persons that go on their way inoffensively, and without obstruction or stumbling.

that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel!

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good-will.

brethren, that the bonds and afflictions which have befallen me at *Rome*, according to divine appointment, have been permitted and over-ruled, by the wise and holy providence of God, contrary to all outward appearances, and natural expectations, rather to the confirmation and propagation, than to the disadvantage and hindrance of the gospel.

13 Inasmuch that the hardships and imprisonments, which I am enabled to bear with a becoming patience and fortitude of mind, through the gracious presence of Christ with me, are well known among all *Nero's* courtiers, and all the citizens and other people in and round about *Rome*, to be, not for any crime that I have been guilty of, but merely for the sake of Christ, which is matter of glory, rather than shame, and hath proved the happy occasion of many people's inquiring after him, and believing in him; among which are some of *Cæsar's* household, (*Phil. iv. 22.*)

14 And, through the influence of divine grace, many brethren in the faith of Christ, and in the work of the ministry, being fully satisfied of the justice and excellence of my cause, and of the power of the Lord Jesus, which has visibly supported and comforted me under all my troubles, and given success to his word, have thereupon taken courage, and been more abundantly animated, and emboldened to preach the gospel with a greater freedom and liberty of spirit, than they ever were before, without being terrified by the fear of any sufferings that might come upon them for it.

15 There are some indeed of the *judaizing* Christians, that preach up Jesus as the true Messiah, and several important doctrines of salvation by him, even from a spirit of envy at my reputation and success, in carrying the gospel to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, and insisting on justification through faith in Christ alone, without the works of the law *; and they do this

N O T E.

* It is generally, and with great probability supposed, that they, who preached Christ of envy and strife, were *Jewish* converts that set themselves against the apostle *Paul*, and, on all occasions, did what they could to hinder his success, run him down, and promote his troubles of every kind: But I cannot think that, on this occasion, they preached a quite different gospel from the apostle's, according to their own corrupt *judaizing* notions: For he, who so constantly and zealously declaimed against this, as *another gospel*, for which, he that brought it was to be deemed accu-

sed, (*Gal. i. 8, 9.*) would scarce have called it *preaching Christ*, as he does in this and some following verses; much less would have rejoiced in it, as he says he did and would. *ver. 18.* I therefore rather apprehend that they hypocritically preached the true gospel of Christ, farther than they honestly could upon their own principles, concealing their sentiments about some of its articles, that they might draw off the affections of the apostle's friends from him to themselves, and might sow strife and divisions among them, and thereby exasperate the government against him and his adherents.

this with a spirit of contention and opposition to me, that they may sink my credit and authority, and advance their own in the church; but there are others, that preach the pure doctrines of Christ, in their full extent, with all freedom and delight, even from an hearty affection to him and his gospel, to immortal souls, and to me his apostle.

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

16 The first of this sort of preachers, that set forth Christ in their ministrations, by way of envy and strife, do it, not (*αγνως*) from a sincere desire of propagating the truth as it is in Jesus, and of glorifying him; nor from a hearty concern to embrace him themselves, and recommend him to others; but rather from a vain imagination that they shall thereby supplant, distress, and grieve me, and so increase the weight of my present afflictions; and that they shall be a means of promoting the continuance of my bonds, and, perhaps, of making them issue in my martyrdom, through the umbrage that the government may take at these contentious ways of preaching the word, and at the divisions which they may foment, by that means, among the professors of Christ.

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

17 But the other sort of preachers, that are acted by a true spirit of love to Christ and souls, and to his cause and me in preaching him, do it as, not merely imagining *, but as being *well satisfied*, on the surest grounds, that I am appointed, and set in the church, by a divine commission, for maintaining, vindicating, and defending the true gospel of Christ; and that I now lie in bonds in order to my making an apology for it, whenever I shall be brought upon my trial.

18 What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

18 But, if contrary views induce these two parties to take occasion to preach Christ, what is this to me? shall I return envy for envy, or be vexed on this account, as some of them suppose I would? No, though I pity them that are influenced to it, by unworthy motives, and heartily detest their insincerity; yet, which way soever the thing itself be done, whether with dissimulation,

NOTES.

rents. This is what he calls preaching Christ *insincerely and in pretence*, in opposition to others, who preached him in love, and in truth or uprightness. But some think that they fully preached the true gospel, though with insincerity and base views.

* The apostle speaks of his enemies, ver. 16. as only (*οικουνοι*) *supposing*, (in which they were deceived) that they should add affliction to his bonds; but, in opposition thereunto, he here speaks of

faithful ministers, as *knowing*, (*ειδως*) or being assured on the strongest evidence, that he was *set for the defence of the gospel*; which may take in, both his being *appointed to it* in the discharge of his office, and his *lying in bonds*, in order to his making a public *apology* (*απολογιας*) for it, in answer to his accusers: For the word (*κειμαι*) here rendered *set*, as it also is in *Luke ii. 3. 4.* signifies likewise to be *laid*, and is so translated, *Mat. iii. 10.* and *Luke xxiii. 53.*

disimulation, under a sham pretext of zeal for Christ and the gospel, and the welfare of souls; or with sincerity and uprightness, to promote his interest and glory, and their good, *the fact* is, that Christ is made known by these means at *Rome*, and round about it: And, as this is in itself matter of great joy, I heartily do; yea, and, by the grace of God, will rejoice in it, whatsoever any of them may think to the contrary; and how much soever they may design thereby to strike at my character, or even at my liberty and life itself.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

19 For I am persuaded in an humble dependence upon the promises of God, yea, am fully assured, by the revelation of the Spirit, that even the worst designs of my adversaries, in their preaching the gospel to distress me, shall be over-ruled by the good providence of God, contrary to their hopes, for my enlargement and deliverance from my bonds, that I may be at liberty to preach the gospel without restraint; (*ver. 25. **) and that all their malicious attempts against me shall be sanctified to my own soul's benefit, as well as the good of others, and made subservient, instead of being obstructive, to my eternal salvation; as, by means of them, I shall be helped forward to it, and fitted for it with the brighter glory, (*2 Cor. iv. 17.*) through the prayers which ye are daily putting up, and I desire may still be continued for me; and through the rich communications of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, whereby, in answer to your prayers, I am enabled to make a good improvement of all these dispensations, to his glory, the advantage of others, and the comfort of my own soul.

20 According to my earnest expectation, and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always,

20 This I am thoroughly satisfied will be the happy event according to what I firmly expect, and vehemently desire; namely, that whatsoever my adversaries may design, or do against me; yet I shall never be suffered, in any circumstance of things, to be ashamed of Christ and his gospel, nor of my hope in

C 2

him;

N O T E

* *Spiritual* and *eternal*, as well as *temporal* salvation, are taken into the paraphrase; because the *supply of the Spirit of Christ*, through which the apostle was satisfied the design of his enemies would turn to his salvation, seems, most plainly, to refer to this sort of salvation, which he knew he, by that means, should be partaker of, though his enemies would have prevented it, by forcing him, if possible, through their evil practices against him, to give up and renounce the gospel: For the *supply of*

the Spirit relates, not so much to *temporal*, as to *spiritual* and *eternal* salvation, over and above all temporal deliverances, which were to be expected rather, as the effect of the operations of *Providence* for him, than from a *supply of the Spirit of Christ* to him; and in his enlargement upon this subject, in some following verses, he speaks of his *gain in death*, and of the rich advantage of his being with Christ, as the object of his earnest desire and hope, *ver. 21, 23.*

so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life or by death.

him; but shall be enabled to go on in his work with all liberty of spirit and undaunted courage; (*μαρτυρία*) and that as I always, through grace, have hitherto in this way glorified the name of my great Lord and Master, ever since he converted me and called me to the apostleship; so both now, and from this time forward, Christ shall be glorified, and the power of his grace toward me shall be eminently exalted, in this my frail mortal body, whether it be by a patient continuance under sufferings, and a further publication and defence of the gospel, and by a holy life and conversation during my abode in it; or by my suffering martyrdom, and bravely owning and honouring him in the most cruel and violent death that can be inflicted upon me for his sake.

21 For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

21 For Christ is my gain in living and dying, as he is my all, and lives in me; and as his interest and glory are the delightful end I pursue in both, that I may bring honour to his name, and gain over souls to him by preaching the gospel while I live, and by sealing my testimony to him with my blood, when I come to die*; which will also be to my own unspeakable gain in the complete salvation which I hope for through him. (*ver. 19.*)

22 But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not:

22 But if it should please God to lengthen out my days in mortal flesh, to preach, and suffer for the gospel, the great fruit of my laborious and painful services, even all that I think worth living for, is to promote the honour and interest of Christ, which in the end will also turn to my own account; and therefore, were it to be left to my determination, I am at a loss to know whether, upon the whole, I should choose life or death.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

23 For I am greatly straitened and pressed, in my own thoughts, between two things, that engage my serious concern; having, on one hand, an earnest desire to be loosed from the incumbrance, weakness, and imperfections, natural and moral, of this corruptible frail body, and to be released by a departure of my immortal soul from it, that I may be with Christ, in his immediate presence, to behold his glory, which I shall do as soon as ever my soul is absent from

N O T E.

* I have considered these words (*το ὅτι ζῶν Χριστός καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κερδοῦς*) according to the different renderings that have been given of them, either as they stand in our translation, or as signifying, *Christ is my gain in living and dying*; or, *to me living and dying Christ is gain*: But they seem to include gain to the apostle himself, as well as to the ho-

nour of Christ, at death; because in the next verse, which may be considered as an explication and enlargement of his thought in this, he intimates, that were he to live in the flesh, his honouring Christ would be the fruit of his labour; but were he to die, this would still be far better for himself; and therefore he was in a strait what to choose.

from the body * ; (2 Cor. v. 6.) and which, far exceeding all thought or expression, is incomparably better for myself, than any condition in the present life can possibly be.

24 Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

24. But (δε) there is another thing that, on the contrary, my heart is so much set upon, as to make me desirous, if it so please God, of continuing some time longer in this present mortal body, to exercise the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus; and that is, because, as I verily believe, (ver. 25.) this is most for your spiritual benefit, considering the enemies, temptations, and dangers that surround you, and the help ye need against them; and therefore I am willing to live for public service, even in this troublesome world, how much soever it may be my own personal loss, to be kept all that while out of heaven.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith;

25 And being in great hopes that this noble end of my living in the body would be answered, by the blessing of God on my labours, I am persuaded in my own mind, by intimations of the Spirit, that my life shall still be preserved for a while, notwithstanding the threatening aspect of my present suffering circumstances; and that I shall have an opportunity of seeing and ministering to, and of continuing and conversing for some time with you, as well as with other churches of the saints, for promoting your spiritual edification in light and grace, comfort and holiness; and particularly for the further helping of your faith, through the attending power of the Holy Ghost, that ye may be filled with all joy and peace in believing; (Rom. xv. 13.)

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, by my coming to you again.

26 That so your delightful glorying (καυχουσα) in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, may be much greater, on account of my being restored to you, than ever it has been hitherto, or than probably it ever would be, were I never to be set at liberty, and come to you again; and may be abundantly increasing yet more and more, through the confirmation which your faith will receive by my wonderful deliverance from imprisonment, and by means of the benefit, which ye may have, through my ministrations, when I return to you.

27 In

N O T E.

* If the soul were to sleep, or be in a state of insensibility at death, till the general resurrection of the body, the apostle could have hoped for no more advantage by dying soon, than if he were to have lived many years longer; and consequently could have been in no strait between a desire of living here for the

service of Christ, or of dying, to enjoy the happiness of being with him in his glory; nor could he have imagined, in this view of things, that it would have been exceedingly far better (πολλω μάλ' ον χρησιμος) for himself to die out of hand, than to live longer on earth. (See the note on 2 Cor. v. 1.)

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel;

27 In the mean while, there is one thing that I would earnestly recommend to you, and insist upon, as necessary to evidence the truth of your faith, and to promote the peace of your own souls, and my comfort in you; which is, that (*καλισινεσι*) your traffic and behaviour in the world, and one towards another, be answerable to your holy citizenship, and such as is worthy your Christian-state and character, and suitable to the directions, and ornamental to the principles, privileges, and obligations, and to your holy profession of the gospel, which has Christ for its glorious author and chief subject; so that whether, when I may have opportunity of coming to see you again; or whether, while by Providence I am detained from you, I may hear from yourselves, or others, a comfortable account of the true state of things among you, as to your spiritual concerns; and particularly that, notwithstanding all the subtle and furious attempts of your adversaries, ye persevere and abide firm and unshaken, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, in one and the same evangelical spirit of liberty, truth, and love; and unite, as with one heart and soul, and concur in vigorous efforts, like wrestlers, against all opposition, (*συναθλευεις*) according to your respective stations and abilities, for preserving, propagating, and defending the pure, uncorrupted, and important doctrines of faith, as delivered in the gospel, which ye have received of me; and for promoting the grace of faith in one another, that it may be in lively exercise, and stedfastly professed, to the glory of Christ, and the good of your own and others souls.

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

28 And I should rejoice greatly to hear, that, how artful, or cruel and outrageous soever the enemies may be, who set themselves against your faith, and the prosperity and salvation of your souls, ye behave with Christian fortitude, and are by no means affrighted, or discouraged at their opposition to you and the gospel, which carries indeed a sad presage to them, as a plain mark of their being in the way to, and in the nearest danger of eternal destruction; and it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them, * while they look upon you, as a people obstinately bent upon your own ruin: But unto you, that

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* Which is an evident token of perdition, is supposed by some to mean, that the Jewish opposers accounted the believing Gentiles to be obstinate and incorrigible, and abandoned of God to everlasting perdition. I have glanced

at this sense, though I take the other to be less strained, and full as well, or better suited to the apostle's design, in fortifying the *Philippians* against being terrified by their adversaries.

that are persecuted for the sake of Christ, and bear it with faith and patience, it is in reality an evident token of eternal salvation, and *that* not of yourselves, but of God, as his free gift, who calls you to the trial, and is able, faithful, and willing to stand by you in it, and carry you through it, and crown you with everlasting life at the end of it. (See *Mat.* v. 10, 11, 12.)

29 For unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

29 For it is a distinguishing honour, which God graciously puts upon you, on account of the merit of Christ; and, though flesh and sense judge otherwise, it really is, and ought to be esteemed matter of great joy, (*James* i. 2.) that ye should not only be enabled to trust in him, and continue so to do, to the saving of your souls; but that ye should also be helped, patiently to endure persecutions for him, from a principle of faith, and love to him, and for his glory here, that ye may be glorified with him, in a more illustrious manner hereafter. (See *Rom.* viii. 17.)

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

30 And still further to reconcile you to, and keep you from fainting under those sufferings for Christ, which do, or may befall you in this world, ye would do well to consider, that they are only the same sort of combat, (*anyway*) which ye have formerly seen me violently exercised with, and yet enabled, through grace, to sustain with holy fortitude and patience, for the same glorious cause, among yourselves at *Philippi*; (*Acts* xvi. 19,—24.) and which ye now hear I am sorely conflicting with, under my present bonds and imprisonment at *Rome*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How well are those churches furnished with all needful officers, that have faithful pastors and deacons, to take care of their spiritual and temporal concerns! And with what cordial and devout affection should we wish and pray, that all the blessings of grace and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, may be multiplied to them and their officers! They are charitably supposed to be saints in Christ; and it is matter of great thankfulness to God, that they are admitted to, and continue in the fellowship of the gospel, and bear the evident traces of that good work of grace, which we may be confident its great Author will carry on, till it be perfected at the coming of Jesus Christ. And O how desirable is it, that sincerity, light, and love, and an inoffensive deportment, and high approbation of spiritual things, together with the fruits of righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God, should unitedly increase and abound in us! The preaching of Christ is his appointed means of promoting these important ends, as well as of the conversion of sinners; and he will own it as his ordinance, though some may be influenced by unworthy, hypocritical, envious, and contentious views, to engage in that sacred office. But how amiable is it, when it is discharged with fidelity, and with sincere affection to Christ, to his servants, people, and cause! However, if Christ be really preached according to the truth of the gospel, whether from good or bad motives, we ought to rejoice in the thing itself; and it discovers a most excellent spirit when we are enabled so to do, even while we apprehend it is designed to lessen our own personal credit, comfort, and usefulness: But, whatever others may intend, God will over-rule the sufferings of his faithful servants, for the defence and furtherance of the gospel; for encouraging some

some to appear openly in the cause of Christ; and for emboldening their own faith and hope, and helping forward their own salvation, through the prayers of his people, and the supply of his Spirit. And what a happy strait is it for them not to know whether they shall choose life, through their earnest concern to glorify Christ in their services and sufferings, for the edification of the church; or shall choose death, through their vehement desire to go immediately to Christ, which they assuredly know is best of all for themselves! What an honour is it to suffer with a right spirit for the sake of Christ! And how should believers esteem this, as well as faith itself, to be rather a gift of grace, on account of his merit, than to be thought of with terror! Only it behoves them to take care, that, by the grace of God, their conversation be holy, as becomes the gospel of Christ; and that they stand fast with one mind and heart, striving together, with fervent zeal, for the faith once delivered to the saints, whatsoever the consequence may be, as to this world. And O how near do they, and their spiritual affairs, lie to the hearts of their good ministers! They are continually mindful of them in their prayers; they heartily bless God for them, as partakers of grace with themselves; they rejoice in their prosperity; and their tenderest affectionate desire (as they can appeal to God) is toward them, that they may enjoy their company and communion, and may be helpful to them for their support under troubles, and for their furtherance and joy of faith.

C H A P. II.

The apostle exhorts the Philippians to a harmonious, kind, and humble spirit and behaviour, by various moving arguments, and particularly by the example of Christ, 1,—11. To diligence in the affairs of their salvation, in consideration of God's working in them, 12, 13. To be exemplarily and instructive to the world, and a comfort to himself, 14,—18. And he assures them of his desire, hope, and purpose of making them a visit; and, in the mean while, of sending to them Timothy and Epaphroditus, both of which he recommends to their kind and honourable regards, 19,—30.

TEXT.

IF there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies;

PARAPHRASE.

AS I have expressed my willingness to abide in the flesh for your furtherance and joy of faith, (*chap. i. 25.*) I would therefore earnestly press upon you the important things before recommended, (*chap. i. 27.*) by several moving considerations, as follow, if there be any authority in my exhortation, (*παρακλήσις*) as delivered to you in the name of Christ; or any argument to be drawn from the excellency of that consolation which ye have in him, and derive from him; or if ye would comfort me under my present tribulations for Christ: If any obligation arises from a joyous sense of his love, and of the love of God in him to you; or from the pleasure of your own love to him, and of your mutual Christian love one to another; or if ye would have in yourselves, and give me the comfort of my love to you, and of yours to me: If there be any inducement from a consideration of that holy communion, that ye have, together with myself, in the special influen-

ces;

ces, gifts, graces, and communications of the Holy Spirit, which also gives you a *fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*; (1 John i. 3.) or from a consideration of your spiritual fellowship one with another, as members of the same body, of which Christ is the head: If there be any force in a reflection on the most tender and affectionate dispositions which are in the heart of God, and have discovered themselves, through Christ, with the kindest compassion toward you, or which he has wrought, by his Spirit, in you towards one another, and me, his prisoner in bonds. If, I say, there be any reality, worth, pleasure, obligation, or endearment in these things, as there certainly is; and if, as I trust, ye yourselves have experienced them in your own souls;

² Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

² Let these excite and engage you to fill up the measure of that satisfaction and joy which ye have already begun to give me; the joy I mean is, that ye be entirely united with me, and with one another, in mind and heart, and *that* particularly in the following things; that ye, as Christians, be knit together in sincere love and affection to Christ, and me his servant, as I am to you, and in brotherly love one to another; that ye unanimously agree to join with me, in pursuing one and the same design, for promoting the interest of Christ, the purity of the gospel, and your mutual edification; and that ye be all of the same judgment, and of * the same relish, with myself, as to the great doctrines of the Christian faith, in opposition to all *judaizing* errors.

³ Let nothing be done through strife, or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

³ Take heed that nothing be said or done among you, from a litigious or ostentatious temper, which delights in opposition to others, and applause to itself; but let every thing be managed in your church-assemblies, and in all your conversation and behaviour, with such an humble frame of spirit, as shall dispose all and every one of you to entertain a modest and mean opinion of their own attainments †, and to be ready

NOTES.

* *Be like-minded* (το αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε) and *be of one mind*, (το ἓν φρονοῦντες) express just the same idea, if we take them separately, and apart by themselves: But, as it cannot be thought that the apostle was guilty of such a needless tautology, as taking them in the same sense and latitude imports, I apprehend the easiest way of freeing him from it, is to consider *like-minded* as a general term, and the three following expressions as explanatory of the particulars he included in it, namely, as *having the same love*,

being of one accord, and of *one mind*; and, it seems to me, that by the last of these, he intended an agreement in *sentiments*, as to the doctrines of the gospel; because he is here enforcing what he had said, chap. i. 27. about their *standing fast in one spirit, in one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel*. This preserves a proper distinction in the sense of all these words.

† Though Christians of eminent gifts and graces may, and cannot but account their attainments to be superior to others

ready to condescend to persons of the lowest degree; as also to think and speak better of others, that walk becoming their profession, than of themselves, as observing, and being duly affected with a sense of their own failings, and casting a mantle of love upon the defects of other Christians, whose hearts, for aught they know, may be better, and more approved of God, than their own.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

4 In order to your attaining this excellent disposition, let every one of you take heed of a narrow selfish spirit, of magnifying his own endowments, or of aiming at (*μὴ ἐκκενῆς*) his own honour, ease, and secular interests, as though this were the chief mark and scope of his endeavours and conduct; but let every one, as acted by a generous public spirit, think himself bound in duty, not, like a busy body, to meddle with other people's matters, but, in his own proper sphere, to consult and pursue those things that make for their edification and peace, comfort and advantage, both in temporal and spiritual affairs.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

5 For, (*γὰρ*) in opposition to strife, vain-glory, and self-seeking, the same spirit of meekness, humility, and love ought to prevail in you, which was so eminently conspicuous, and so perfectly exemplified in our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

6 Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;

6 Who, being possessed of the divine nature*, and of all its essential perfections, as the Son of God, and as the *brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person*; (Heb. i. 3.) and so really, and in the strictest sense, God, in the true and proper form of deity, did not count it an usurpation, injury, or wrong, or any act of rapine in him, to claim an equality of nature with God the Father; he and

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thers of the lowest class, as the apostle speaks of his own gifts and labours; yet, like him, they ought to be humble in ascribing nothing to themselves, but all to the grace of God, (1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. and 2 Cor. xii. 11.) And, with respect to true religion, charity should teach them to hope, that there may be something more excellent, and less offensive to God in the hearts of other believers, than they find in their own, who, on one account or another, are apt to think their own worse than others; because, the more they know themselves, the more they see the treachery and villainy of their own, than it is possible for them to see of the hearts of others, whose conversation is such as becomes the gospel of Christ.

form of a servant in the next verse; and, as the *form of a servant*, which Christ is there said to have taken upon him, is meant of his being really a *servant* in his assumed human nature, with reference to which, it is added, that he was *made in the likeness of man*, the plain meaning of which is, that he was *really man*; so the *form of God*, which he was originally in, must, in all reason, mean, that he was, in his prior nature, as *truly and properly God*, as he was in his human nature *man* and a *servant*; and therefore it might well be said, that *he thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, as I think this passage is justly rendered. (See this sense of it vindicated in my sermons on *Jesus Christ God-man*, p. 21.

* The *form of God* is opposed to the

and the Father being *essentially One*, though *personally distinct*. (John x. 30.)

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

7 Nevertheless (*αλλὰ*) he was pleased, by a wonderful act of condescension, so far to disrobe, and, as it were, empty himself, of the bright appearances of his divine majesty and glory, as not to make a pompous shew of them; but, in great measure, to conceal them from the observation of men, while, in themselves, they continued to be really and essentially the same as ever, and *all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt substantially in him*: (Col. ii. 9.) And he voluntarily assumed human nature into personal union with himself, in so low and mean a condition, as therein to become his Father's servant, living and acting, bleeding and dying, according to his commandment, (John x. 18.) and as even to act the part of a servant towards his disciples, (Luke xii. 37.) and go through the most painful, humbling, and difficult services for their redemption and salvation; and he was so truly and properly man, as to be *made like unto his brethren*, of human nature, *in all things, sin only excepted*. (Heb. ii. 17. and iv. 15.)

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

8 And when he was found in the common form and condition of man, as though he had been nothing more, he submitted himself to the lowest degree of service and sufferings; and went into a course of the most humble obedience, as to his parents and magistrates, in all lawful things, so to his heavenly Father, as his servant, to answer all the demands of his holy law, both in fulfilling its precepts, and suffering its curse; and this obedience he paid even unto death, and all along, till he came to die, yea, and in his dying, (John x. 18.) not an ordinary death, but the ignominious, painful, and accursed death of the cross, to show that he stood in the place of transgressors, who were under the curse of the law, and that he came to redeem them from it, by bearing it for them. (Gal. iii. 13.)

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

9 And, having fulfilled his work of redemption in this humble, obediential, and suffering manner, God his Father, as a reward of all this, according to its deserts, and his covenant-agreement, (Isa. liii. 9.—11.) has gloriously exalted him, not by advancing him to a state of greater essential happiness, perfection, or glory, than he had before, as God, which admits of no addition; but by raising him, as man, from the dead, receiving him up to glory, and setting him at his own right hand, and giving him universal dominion, as mediator; and so he illustriously manifested this divine person to be as great and glorious as he always was in himself: And, to recom-

• mend him by the most endearing motives to our acknowledgment of him as such, he has granted him, in his office-capacity, as his incarnate Son, a new title of authority and honour, incomparably superior to any other name, dignity, or authority whatsoever, among angels or men; yea, too great for any mere creature to wear, or be worthy of, even the name of the Saviour, and the constituted Lord of all. (ver. 10, 11.) And he has done this,

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

10 To the end that, (*ver.*) in token of the religious honours which are due to the exalted Saviour, every one should bow the knee, not at barely pronouncing the word *Jesus*, nor merely in a literal sense, in which the angels in heaven, that are to bow before him, have no knees; but in paying such solemn homage, adoration, and worship to this glorious and divine person, whose name is *Jesus*; and in being so entirely subject to him, (see the note on *Rom. xiv. 11.*) as is signified by bowing the knee, as well as by other expressions of it; and is to be paid to him by all ranks of intelligent creatures, whether they be saints or angels in heaven, or such men as are living upon earth, or as are dead and buried under the earth, when they shall rise again, and appear at his tribunal; then they, and all the wicked on earth, and all the devils in hell, shall either willingly, or by constraint, bow to him, as the great Judge of all.

11 And that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

11 And he is thus highly exalted, that the tongue of every one, of all nations and languages, should either cheerfully own, and celebrate the praises of his universal dominion; or be forced to acknowledge, whether they would or not, that he, the anointed Saviour, is in his office-capacity, and exalted state, the great Head, Lord, and Ruler over all, and the universal Judge at the last day, to the glory of God the Father, whose honour it is to have always had such a Divine Son, as is worthy of so high a commission; (*John v. 23.* and *1 John ii. 23.*) and who, in infinite wisdom, hath appointed his incarnate person to all this dignity, for the glory of his own name. (*John xvii. 1, 2.*)

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence; work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

12 Since therefore the duties of humility, love, and kindness, (*ver. 2,—4.*) are recommended in so lively and affecting a manner, by the matchless example of our Lord himself; let this animate you, my dear brethren, to a noble imitation of him therein; and since, from the time of your conversion, ye have, all along, shown an obediential submission to his commands, and to his authority in me, not only out of regard to my presence, while I was personally among you to observe, assist, admonish, and encourage you; but

but now, more especially to prove the sincerity of your love, while ye are surrounded with seducers, and are not under my immediate inspection and instruction, through my absence from you ; I, in reflection upon this, entreat you, with the greater confidence in your obedience, to be vigorously active, under divine influence, in promoting the salvation of one another, (see the note on *Eph.* iv. 32.) and to go forward, and abound in a diligent exercise and practice of the forementioned, and all other graces and duties that are necessary, in the nature of things, and by the appointment of God, for the final accomplishment of that salvation, which is already your own, by the gift of the Father, the purchase of the Son, and the application and earnest of the Spirit : And I beseech you to labour in this manner about your own salvation, every one personally for himself, not with a servile, distrustful, and desponding fear, but with a holy, filial, and awful reverence of the Divine Majesty, and a cautious fear of sinning against, and thereby offending and dishonouring him ; (*Psal.* ii. 11. and *1 Pet.* i. 17.) and with humble dread of doing any thing to provoke his frowns and displeasure, the hidings of his face, the withdrawals of his assistance, and the chastisements of his rod, in opposition to self-confidence and carnal security, with regard to an affair of such infinite importance.

13 For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

13 For, to encourage your utmost diligence herein, on one hand, and to guard you against pride and carnal security, on the other, remember that the gracious and holy God, who has begun his good work in your souls, (*verba*) continues to carry it on ; with internal virtue and powerful energy, till it be perfected, (*chap.* i. 6.) as it is he, that excites, inclines, and determines your will, in a way consistent with the truest liberty of a rational creature, and enables you to perform the things that relate to your salvation ; and does this, not for any desert in yourselves to move him to it, but merely of his own free and sovereign grace, which he exerts with the greatest pleasure and delight, (*Mat.* xi. 26. and *Micah* vii. 18.) * and by which he works in you both to choose, and

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* The word *his*, not being in the Greek, some suppose that *good pleasure* relates, not to the manner with which God works in us, but with which believers do, as well as *will*, under his workings ; and so may signify that the effect of his working in us is *our* willing, and doing with freedom and delight, as serving the Lord with *good-will*, under the

influence of his Spirit and grace, according to the apostle's use of this word, *chap.* i. 15. And this may be a very good sense of the phrase, while we consider God as working all this in us, and exciting and influencing us to it by his Spirit. But, I rather think, that *good pleasure* refers to the way and manner of God's working in us, than to the way and

14 Do all things without murmurings, and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

and do every thing that is good, in the use of proper means, with freedom and cheerfulness.

14 In dependence therefore upon, and compliance with his gracious operations in you, take special heed, that, according to what has been suggested, (*ver.* 3.) ye, in the whole of your conduct, avoid all discontent at the prosperity of others, or at the disposals of Providence toward yourselves; and all animosities and wrangling disputations one against another; and disputings against the things which God enjoins upon you, or which ye may be called to suffer for Christ's sake.

15 That ye may be in reality, and appear to yourselves and others to be, unreprouable and inoffensive in your temper and conversation, and sincere in your dealings with both God and man, as becomes the children of your heavenly Father, to distinguish you from the children of the devil; that there may be no just occasion of complaint or accusation against you, for any irregularity in your walk, nor any room for the most captious adversary to revile and censure you, while ye live in the midst of a generation of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that are exceedingly corrupt and depraved in their minds and manners, like persons bent and warped from the strait rule of righteousness, perverse in heart, and turned aside from the right ways of the Lord; among whom ye, as Christians, and a church of Christ, are set up, ought to be, and in great measure are, as shining lights, and illustrious examples, for the direction, conviction, and imitation of the men of this world, that they, *seeing your good works, may glorify your Father, which is in heaven:* (*Mat. v. 16.*)

16 Ye herein holding fast (*κατακρατεῖτε*) with perseverance; and holding up to all around you, with evidence and recommendation, Christ himself, who is our life; (see *Col. iii. 4.* and *1 John i. 1.*) and the glorious doctrine of eternal life, in all its purity and excellence, as it reveals and shews the way of obtaining it through him, and is the power of God to the salvation of every one that believes: (*Rom. i. 16.*) This I am greatly concerned for, that, according to my hope, I may rejoice and glory in your steadfastness and

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and manner of *our willing and acting* towards him, in things that relate to our salvation: For *our doing with good pleasure*, is much the same with *our willing to do it*; and this word (*ουδονια*) as far as I find, is never used to express *our acting*; about *our own* salvation;

but is frequently used with reference to God, and his way and manner of acting about it, and is commonly rendered *his good pleasure*, or *good will*, or *that which seems good to him*, as in *Mat. xi. 25, 26. Luke ii. 14. and xii. 32. Eph. i. 5, 9. and 2 Thess. i. 11.*

and usefulness here, and in your complete salvation hereafter, when we shall appear together in the presence of Christ, at his coming to judge the world in the great day of account; (1 *Thess.* ii. 19, 20.) as finding then, that all my strivings, pains, and labours for, and with you, in the course of my ministry, have not been fruitless and ineffectual; but, by the grace of God, have answered their desired end, to his glory and your everlasting happiness.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

17 Yea, and such is my love to you, that I not only hope, and rejoice in the hope of this happy fruit of my labours among you; but if (*ἀλλ' ἐν καὶ σπέρματι*) in pursuit of them, the providence of God should so order it, that I, his prisoner, must not only undergo great sufferings, but even lay down my life to seal my testimony with my blood, and to be poured out, like the oil and wine on the meat and drink-offerings, (*Exod.* xxix. 4. and *Lev.* ii. 1.) to complete the sacrifices under the law, in ministering before the Lord: (*ἀνθυμῶνα*) If this should befall me, for the further confirmation of your faith as believing *Gentiles*, who are offered up as an acceptable sacrifice to God, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, (*Rom.* xv. 16.) I am so far from being troubled at it, that now, in the foresight of it, I do, and then shall rejoice in it; and (*συγχαίρω*) I congratulate you all, upon finishing my work and days in a manner so honourable to Christ, and so richly to your advantage.

18 For the same cause also ye joy, and rejoice with me.

18 And, in return, I beg of you, that on the same account, in case ye should hear of my martyrdom, ye would rejoice and congratulate me, (*συγχαίρετε μοι*) on the honour of my dying in such a way, as shall bear the most noble testimony to the Lord Jesus, and to his gospel, and shall be to the farther encouragement and establishment of your faith in him.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus, to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

19 But, notwithstanding all that I have said about my willingness to die for these great purposes, I am apprehensive that the time for it is not yet come; and I humbly hope and trust in the providential care and gracious kindness of the Lord Jesus, who is highly exalted, and has a name above every name, (*ver.* 9.) and has the government of the church and the world upon his shoulders, (*Isa.* ix. 6.) that my circumstances will soon be in such a situation, as to admit of my sparing the beloved *Timothy*, and sending him, according to my present purpose, to see how matters go with you, and help you in your spiritual concerns, that I may have the greatest satisfaction and pleasure, according to my hopes, when I shall hear from him, that the work of the Lord prospers among you,

you, and that the *Judaizing* teachers have not been able, by all there subtilties and terrors, to pervert or shake you.

20 For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.

20 The reason of my designing to send him is, because I have no Christian-brother with me (*οὐδὲν*) that is equal in excellency of temper with him, or that is like-affected toward you; and that, with regard to doctrine, ministrations and behaviour, walks in the same spirit, and in the same steps with myself, as he does; who sincerely, and with the most genuine affection, (*συμπάσας*) like that which a parent naturally has for his children, will lay your concerns to heart, and carefully study to promote your establishment, edification, and increase with all the increases of God.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

21 For the generality of the other brethren *, that remain with me, are too selfish and pusillanimous, and rather solicitous about their own temporal ease, honour, and safety, than willing to expose themselves to such fatigues, dangers, and reproaches, as I met with at *Philippi*, (*Acts* xvi. 19,—24.) and as they might possibly be called to suffer more, in promoting the interest, cause, and glory of our great Lord and Saviour, and the welfare of his church there, than in some other places.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

22 But ye have had good trial and proof, (*δοκιμὴν*) and an experimental knowledge of *Timothy's* eminent qualifications, faithfulness, courage, and zeal: Ye have seen how, when we were together among you, (*Acts* xvi. 1,—13.) he engaged, in the face of all hazard and opposition, with me, as a fellow-labourer, in preaching and propagating the gospel; and I assure you he always, like me, has been seeking, not his own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved; (*1 Cor.* x. 33.) he has been willing to go wherever I should send him, and to lay himself out in the service of Christ, according to my directions, with all the affection and cheerfulness, respect and duty of a son to his father; he being indeed my own son in the faith, (*1 Tim.* i. 2.) and of the same spirit with me.

23 I

NOTE

* *All* here cannot mean *absolutely* and *universally* every one of the Christian-ministers and brethren, as if none of them had any concern for the interest and glory of Christ: For the apostle speaks honourably of *Epaphroditus*, ver. 25. and tells us, chap. i. 14. that *many* of the brethren, *quaking* confident by his bonds, were much more bold to speak the word without fear: But, perhaps, the best of them were gone to other pla-

ces, and the greatest part of them, that remained with the apostle, were, compared with *Timothy*, more influenced by worldly conveniences and advantages, than by a zealous concern to promote the interest of Christ, particularly at *Philippi*, where it might cost them more abundant trouble, than at some other places, in which they might hope to be useful.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord, that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministereth to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

23 I have therefore fixed upon this excellent and approved young man, and hope I shall be able to send him to you in a very little time, without further delay, after I shall have taken my trial at *Cæsar's* bar, (*Acts* xxviii. 19.) which I daily expect to be called to; and then the fact will prove whether I am to be discharged or not.

24 But though the trial is not yet over, I have an humble confidence in the Lord Jesus, whose I am, and whom I serve, and for whose sake I am now in bonds; that by his over-ruling providence, and gracious appearance for me, I shall be acquitted from the malicious accusations of mine enemies, and set at liberty; and that thereupon I myself may likewise have an opportunity, ere long, of paying you a visit, according to my earnest desire of seeing you, and rejoicing with you.

25 Nevertheless, as I cannot come immediately myself, and *Timothy* cannot yet be spared, I in the mean while thought it proper, and needful for your edification and comfort, and for giving you a present pledge of my affectionate concern for you, to send back, with this letter, the beloved *Epaphroditus*, who is my dear brother in the faith, and in the ministerial office, and my fellow-labourer in the work of the Lord; yea, and my associate, that endures hardships, and exposes himself to dangers with me, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, the Captain of salvation, in our spiritual warfare, under him, against sin and Satan, and against seducers, and all the powers of this world, that set themselves in opposition to him and his cause; and (2d) he is your faithful minister, and kind messenger to me, who has fully answered the trust which ye reposed in him, and has supplied me with such corporal refreshments, by your generous benefactions, and given me such other assistances, as were necessary and convenient for me*.

26 I chose especially to send him, because he was exceeding desirous of visiting you all again; and, like a truly sympathizing friend, was extremely afflicted in his own mind, even to the sinking of his spirits, not so much on account of his own late sickness here, as of your having heard of it, which he, judging of your affection to him, by the experience he has had of it, and by his own to you, concluded would

N O T E.

* It is supposed, with great probability, that *Epaphroditus* was pastor of the church at *Philippi*: However, it is evident from the character the apostle here gives him, that he was a minister, and

was sent as a messenger from that church to the apostle in his bonds; and he is supposed by many to be the same that is called *Epaphras*. Col. i. 7. and iv. 12. and *Philemon*, ver. 2.

would be an occasion of much grief and sore distress to you.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

27 For, as ye heard, he really was seized with a distemper in its own nature mortal, and has been so dangerously ill, as to be brought to death's door: But God, whose prerogative it is to kill and save alive, has in his good providence wonderfully appeared for his recovery, in answer to prayer, even beyond our expectation; which was a great mercy, not only to himself*, in his relief and restoration to health and ease, and capacities of service; but was also an instance of God's tender compassion, as to you and many others, so particularly to myself, lest, by losing so dear and important a friend and brother, I should have been over-loaded with this addition of sorrow, to that of his sickness, and to all the other troubles, I labour under in my confinement.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

28 I therefore the more studiously and diligently (*σπουδαίονως*) dispatched him with all speed to you, though with much self-denial in parting with him, that when ye receive him in a good state of health again, ye may rejoice at the sight, and I may have the satisfaction of contributing to your comfort therein, and of hearing of his arrival safe and sound to you, who spared him so long to minister to me; and so may be the less troubled at my own loss of his company and assistance, and at my other afflictions.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such in reputation:

29 See therefore that, according to my desire and hope, and your own warm professions of love to him, while he was absent, and in danger of death, ye cordially embrace him, as a servant of Christ, and for his sake, who has returned him alive and well to you: Receive him, I say, with all spiritual joy, as well as with humane, civil, and friendly affection: And let all such faithful labourers in the gospel, as he is, be esteemed very highly, and treated with great honour among you, for their work's sake; (1 *Theff.* v. 13.)

And

N O T E.

* As life and health are in themselves mercies, and sickness and death are the fruit of sin; it is, in that view, a mercy, even to a good man, to be restored to health for the service of God, and the good of others, after a threatening illness; though in the view of the consequences of death, in a happy exchange of this frail and mortal life for a blessed immortality, it is better for himself to die, than to live in this troublesome and sinful world. (See *chap.* i. 23.) And though the apostle was so much affected with *Ephraimites*'s sickness; yet he seems to have made no attempt for heal-

ing him in the miraculous way; while he, doubtless, as well as others, prayed for his recovery. The reason of this might be, because he could not perform such miracles at all times, and whenever he pleased; there being no virtue in himself for it, as there was in our Lord, which was a glory and power peculiar to him; (*Luke* vi. 19. and viii. 46.) and because miraculous signs were for them that believe not, to confirm the gospel to them, as the apostle said of tongues: (1 *Cor.* xiv. 22.) But there seems not to have been any such occasion for working this miracle.

And ye ought in a special manner to shew the highest regard to *Epaphroditus*;

30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life to supply your lack of service toward me.

30 Because it was by means of the great fatigues he underwent for Christ's sake, in love to him, and zeal for his interest and glory, that he contracted the illness, which brought him so near the point of death; he having been excessive in his labours, even to the neglecting a due care of his health; as not regarding his own life, but willingly hazarding it, by going on my messages, and preaching the gospel to such, as I could not come at in my confinement; and by often attending upon, and ministering to me, and so making up the want of your personal assistances, which, had ye been here, ye readily would have afforded me; but which, at this distance, ye were incapable of.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How sweet and endearing are arguments taken from divine consolations, and inward glowings of love and compassion, to brotherly kindness and condescension, humility and meekness, and a sincere regard to each other's edification and comfort! And how engaging to all this is the matchless example of Christ! Though he was really God, possessed of the divine nature and perfection, equally with the Father, and so had a rightful claim to all the honours of Deity; yet, in his infinite love and pity to his people, he stooped so low as to assume human nature into personal union with himself; and, in this nature, instead of shining forth in all the lustres of Godhead, he ordinarily concealed them, and, as it were, disrobed himself of them; and, appearing in the mean state of a servant, submitted to the lowest and severest course of obedience to his Father's will and law, till he finished it in the painful and shameful death of the cross. And O how meritorious and pleasing to God the Father was this! He, as the just reward of it, has exalted him in human nature, and office-authority, to the highest dignity and honour in heaven, that this divine Saviour might be treated as the object of all adoration and homage, and the whole world of angels and men might be brought into an entire subjection to him, as Lord of all, to the glory of God the Father. With what humble caution, self-diffidence, reverence of God, and holy diligence, should believers attend to the things that relate to their own salvation! And what rich encouragement have they to it, since God, of his own good pleasure, is ever present with them, to excite, assist, and animate their holy inclinations and performances! And how highly does it concern them to behave meekly and inoffensively, as becomes the children of God, with shining evidence, and a recommending profession of the gospel of salvation, in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate age! And O what a pleasure is it to the faithful servants of Christ, to see this happy fruit of their labours! For the producing of this, they could willingly submit, not only to imprisonment, but even to death itself, and rejoice in the noble testimony they should thereby bear to him: And when they are under confinement for his sake, how desirous are they to hear that the church prospers; and to send such to minister to them, as may be most acceptable and useful among them! Though there be too many that seek their own things, rather than the things of Jesus Christ, which is for a lamentation; yet, blessed be God, there are some who, like *Timothy* and *Epaphroditus*, as well as *Paul*, are heartily and affectionately disposed to lay themselves out disinterestedly in the cause of the dear Redeemer, and have longed desires to be helpful to the faith and joy of his people: All such are to be received with gladness, and to be highly esteemed and honoured for their work's sake. But O how affecting is it when such eminent instruments are confined in bonds, or are sick nigh unto death! What a sympathizing spirit is there, in such circumstances, between them and all that truly fear the Lord! How willing are they to assist one another! And what matter of rejoicing is it, when God sets his prisoners free, and has mercy on his sick servants, and on their mourning and praying friends, in restoring them to health, and to capacities and opportunities of further service!

C H A P. III.

The apostle cautions the Philippians against judaizing false teachers, whom he describes, as he also does true Christians in opposition to them, 1,—3. Recites his own former privileges, and renounces all these for Christ, 4,—8. Expresses his earnest desire to be found in him, and his pressing on toward perfection, 9,—14. And recommends his own example to the imitation of other believers, in opposition to the behaviour of carnal professors, 15,—21.

TEXT.

FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER all * my dear brethren, I would excite you to a truly spiritual joy, not merely in any external helps, means, and privileges; but entirely in our Lord Jesus Christ, under a sense of his love and care, and of the blessings ye have, and hope for in him, that ye may not be perverted, and so robbed of your holy joy, by judaizing teachers; I have therefore thought proper to write the very same things, to caution you against them, that I delivered by word of mouth, while I was present with you, and have ordered *Epaphroditus* to remind you of; (*chap. ii. 25.*) and this I do without any reluctance, as if it were irksome and tedious to me to repeat old things, but with the greatest pleasure, to shew that I am still of the same mind, and that my concern is as great for your edification, and for the purity of the gospel among you, as ever: And it is needful, for your preservation and establishment in the faith, to have these things repeatedly inculcated upon you, and committed to writing, that ye may be put in remembrance of them, (*2 Pet. i. 12.*) and the more deeply impressed with them; and may have opportunity, on all occasions, of reviewing them, to secure you from all the uncertainties, and mistakes of oral tradition about them.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil-workers, beware of the concision.

2 Take heed then of those zealots, and have a strict and watchful eye upon them, who really are as worthless, vile, and contemptible, as the *Jews* have thought the *Gentiles* to be, while they used to denominate them *dogs*, (*Mat. xv. 26, 27.*) and as the ancient false prophets were, that are spoken of as dumb

N O T E.

* Finally is not here, as often in other places, a note of concluding the epistle; for the apostle was got to but about the middle of it, and was now entering upon his main design in it: But it may be of like import with *furthermore*, which is used by way of transition to

what follows; and yet *rejoicing in the Lord*, may look both backwards and forwards, backward to what he had said about *troubles* and *joys*; and forward to what he was going to add against judaizing teachers, and for recommending Christ and glorying in him.

dumb dogs that could not bark; (Isa. lvi. 10.) but they are sometimes, as evidently malicious and injurious, fierce and biting; and at others, as sly and fawning to serve a turn, as the worst of that sort of animals can be; and are justly excluded from the blessings of the heavenly kingdom. (Rev. xxii. 15.) Ye cannot be too watchful against them; and therefore I repeat the charge, Stand upon your guard against these evil doers, and *deceitful workers*, (2 Cor. xi. 13.) who labour to destroy the truth of the gospel, and the purity of the church of Christ. Still further to strengthen my caution, and engage your attention to it, I say again, the third time, Beware, with the utmost circumspection, of that pernicious set of men, who glory in their circumcision, which, as it is now no longer an ordinance of God, is no better than merely cutting off the foreskin of the flesh*; and who rend and tear the church to pieces; and instead of having the covenant of grace confirmed to them by that rite, as formerly, they, by depending upon it, cut themselves off from Christ, and all the benefits of the gospel-covenant, and cannot be deem'd real Christians, whatever their pretences be. (See Gal. v. 2,—4.)

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:

3 For, in opposition to these vain boasters, who may be more properly called the *concision*, than the *circumcision*, we, who are sincere believers in Christ, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are after the best and most effectual manner, circumcised in heart, (Leut. xxx. 6. and Rom. ii. 28, 29.) as being *renewed in the spirit of our minds*; (Ephes. iv. 23.) and so are partakers of that *circumcision of Christ*, which is signified by our baptism; (Col. ii. 11, 12.) and are really in covenant with God: We accordingly worship God, not by ceremonial rites and carnal ordinances, nor with merely external expressions and modes of religious adoration; but with our whole souls, in the exercise of spiritual graces, under the light and influence of the Holy Spirit, according to gospel-institution, and to our blessed Lord's own direction: (John iv. 23, 24.) And we glory with abundant joy; yea, even triumph in Christ, and in our own interest in him, as the Lord *our righteousness and strength*, (Isa.

N O T E

* The *concision* signifies the cutting off, in allusion to *circumcision*, which the *Judaizers* gloried in; but which the apostle, to shew his contempt of what they so much boasted of, calls the *concision*; and he speaks of the *circumcision*, or of what had been signified by it, as the privilege and honour of real

Christians, whether they had been circumcised in the flesh, or not; calling them the *circumcision*, (ver. 3.) meaning in a spiritual sense the *circumcised*; the abstract being here, as elsewhere, put for the concrete, according to the note on Rom. ii. 26.

(Isa. xlv. 24, 25.) and as our only Mediator and ground of acceptance and hope: And we renounce all dependence upon, and expectation of favour with God on account of circumcision, or any other *Jewish* ordinances, that pertain to the flesh; or of any thing whatsoever, that we have done, or can do, in performing the righteousness of the law, (*ver.* 6.) by natural principles, which, for their corruption and weakness, may very fitly be styled *flesh*. (John iii. 6. Rom. ii. 5. and viii. 5,—9. See the notes on those passages in the *Romans*.)

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

4 Though as to myself, were there any dependence to be had upon, or any advantage to be found in ordinances and privileges, that pertain to the flesh, or in any thing that the *Judaizers* have done in their carnal unregenerate state, I might boast of these things as much as they. If any of them imagines that he has ground or matter of confidence toward God, on account of fleshly privileges and performances, I could claim as much on this foot as any one of them all; and more than the generality of them *, and especially than any proselyte can do.

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

5 As to *external privileges*, I was duly circumcised the eighth day, according to God's appointment: (*Gen.* xvii. 12.) I am not a proselyte from among the *Gentiles*, but a true native *Israelite* of that tribe, which descended from *Jacob* by his beloved *Benjamin*, the son of his dearest wife *Rachel*; a royal tribe, from which the first king of *Israel* was taken; and a tribe that never revolted to the idolatrous worship of *Jeroboam's* calves at *Dan* and *Beihel*, as all the rest, except that of *Judah*, did: I am a *Jew* of pure extract, both by father and mother's side, and not an *Hellenist*; but of that sort of *Jews* that used the *Hebrew* language in synagogue-worship; And I was, by education and profession, a *Pharisee*, the strictest of all the *Jewish* sects, in their observation of the law of God, and the traditions of the elders. (*Acts* xxi. 6. and xxvi. 5. and *Gal.* i. 13.)

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

6 And as to my regard to these privileges, and doing what I thought my duty in correspondence to them, I came behind none of those that pride themselves in them; my zeal for them was so flaming, that I was vehemently enraged, and went into most furious methods of cruelty and violence against the church of Christ, (*Acts* xxii. 3, 4. and xxvi. 11.) because

N O T E.

* Mr *Pierce* thought the apostle had his eye upon some particular person among the *Philippians*, that endeavoured to draw them off from *Christ* to

Judaism; and that he was only a proselyte, and not a native *Jew*; and so the apostle had more to boast of than

because their principles and profession lay in direct opposition to mine : And at the same time, I was so sincere and careful an observer both of the ceremonial and moral law of *Moses*, that neither mine own conscience did, nor any other person could charge me with any flagrant, or remarkable transgression of either parts of that law ; having *lived in all good conscience before God*, according to my light, all the days of my *judaism*, (Acts xxiii. 1.) and having verily thought that I did God good service in persecuting his New Testament-church. (Acts xxvi. 9.)

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

7 But how much soever I once thought, and any carnal Jew would have flattered himself, that these things were of the greatest advantage to me in my spiritual concerns, as sufficient to secure the favour of God and heaven ; yet when he called me by his grace, I saw that they were all misguided, empty, and deficient ; and that my dependence upon the best of them was unprofitable and injurious to me ; and so I abandoned them all, in point of trust and confidence, for Christ, and (*ηγημαι*) I esteemed them as nothing, and worse than nothing to be relied upon, in competition with him.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ,

8 Yea, and (*αλλα μὲντοι καὶ η̑γημαι*) so far am I, even now, after many years knowledge and experience of the gospel-way of salvation by Jesus Christ alone, from altering my mind as to this matter, that I really still reckon, not only those things, but even all that I have done, in a way of religious and moral obedience since my conversion, which is much more than is found in any carnal Jew ; I count all this, as well as every worldly enjoyment, to be loss, in comparison with the superabundantly more excellent, fiducial, and experimental knowledge of Christ, as the only Saviour, whom I humbly claim and trust in as my Lord, according to the gospel-discovery of him ; for whose sake, and in exchange for whom, I have deemed all things, though not absolutely, yet in a comparative view, and in point of confidence in them, as no better than loss ; and have cast them all away, as goods are thrown over-board, when they endanger sinking the ship ; and I do still reckon them to be not only so, but even, if rested in for salvation, like such worthless and contemptible things, as dung, dregs, or dog's meat, (*συνθρακι*) to the end that, (*να*) by an utter renunciation of them in point of justification, I may at length gain a complete enjoyment of Christ, and of all his saving benefits.

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness,

9 And this I do, that when the strict and public scrutiny, trial, and final decision of my state shall come on, I may be found in Christ with safety, as in a city

ousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

ty of refuge; and may be found to be vitally united with him, as a member of his mystical body, and comprehended in him, as my covenant-head; and so may stand before God in judgment, not as appearing at his bar in my own personal righteousness, to be dealt with according to its desert, which at best is very imperfectly answerable to the requirements of God's holy law; but as clothed with, and judged according to the merit of that righteousness, which consists not in faith itself, but is unto, and upon all true believers through faith in Christ; (*Rom. iii. 22.*) even that righteousness, which he wrought out, by his obedience and sufferings unto death, to the full satisfaction of law and justice in my room and stead; the righteousness, which is of God's own appointing and accepting for justification, and of his imputing, to discharge from condemnation, and intitle to eternal life, in a way of believing *.

10 And

N O T E.

• This context, I think, gives us a beautiful gradation of the apostle's renouncing all trust and confidence in any righteousness but that of Christ: He begins, ver. 5, 6, 7. with renouncing his Jewish privileges, and his Pharisaical righteousness, which consisted in his observance of the moral, as well as ceremonial precepts of the law. For some, at least, of the Pharisees expected to be justified, not merely by a ceremonial, but also by a moral righteousness, joined with it, in conformity to the law, as appears from our Lord's parable of the Pharisee and publican, Luke xviii. 11, 12; and such a Pharisee the famous Gamaliel seems to have been, if we may judge of his moral character from the probity and piety toward God that breathed in his admirable speech, Acts v. 34.—39. And Paul, the Pharisee, who was brought up under him, was as conscientious an observer of moral obedience as any other of that sect could be supposed to be; since he declares that, even in that state, according to his then sense of things, he had lived in all good conscience before God. (Acts xxiii. 1.) And then he advances, ver. 8, 9. to a discarding of all trust, not only in this but also in his own personal righteousness, after he became a Christian: For having said, with a reference back to the things before mentioned, *what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ*, ver. 7. he adds, ver. 8. *Yea doubtless, and I do count loss for Christ, not those things*

only, as we have it before, (*ver. 7.*) but *all things*, without exception or reserve of any thing done by him, after, as well as before conversion: For *ver. 9.* shows that what he intended was, all righteousness of his own for justification according to the requirements of the law; and he declares, that he persisted still in renouncing even this, as insufficient to justify him; and so he sets aside all imaginable righteousness of our own, in opposition to that of faith; and even *faith itself*, which is as much a work of righteousness, and as much our own, inherent in us, and acted by us, as any other grace, or instance of evangelical obedience: He disclaims regarding this, as his justifying righteousness, while he accurately distinguishes faith from this righteousness, which he does not say is faith itself, but is *the righteousness which is of God through faith*, and by faith, as God imputes it, and faith receives it. (See the note on *Rom. iii. 20.*) And his *winning or gaining Christ*, and being *found in him*, seems to relate, not merely to his having an interest in Christ, and being united to him, but to look forward to what he should be at death and judgment; for he had already, and knew that he had, a sure interest in Christ, and so, in that sense, was already in him; and yet he speaks of his present desire and pursuit, that he might, upon trial, be found a partaker of this comprehensive blessing, which evidently relates to some time to come, as expressed in the following verses.

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

10 And my earnest desire is, not only to be found in Christ at the last day, but that in the mean while, and in order thereunto, I may have an experimental growing acquaintance with him in the glory of his person and offices, and in the efficacy of his resurrection, as the head of the body, for confirming my joyful hopes of eternal life, on that foot; and in virtue of it; (1 Pet. i. 3.) and for animating me unto the most vigorous and active obedience, whereby I may still further live to God, in conformity to my risen Saviour; and may be daily led into holy communion with him, in his crucifixion, for *crucifying the old man, the body of sin, that it may be utterly destroyed*; (Rom. vi. 6.) as also for patiently enduring all sufferings, even unto death, for his sake, in conformity to him, who died, and rose again.

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead:

11 This is my constant aim and pursuit, that by these, and all other means of God's appointment, I in due time * may arrive, like sailors to their port, at that complete state of all possible blessedness and glory, which the children of God shall enjoy at the resurrection of the just, when their mortal bodies shall be raised, in a re-union with their souls, to immortal life.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

12 I own that I have not already † received the prize, which I am running for, nor (*ἤδη τελευτωμαι*) am I yet, like those that have finished their course, made perfect in holiness, as I fain would be, and as I must be, before I am honoured with *the crown of righteousness*; (2 Tim. iv. 8.) But (*διωκω*) I pursue my race, stretching forth with the utmost eagerness, that, in God's way and time, I may reach perfection, and lay hold on eternal life; for the attaining of which (*καταληψθην*) I was laid hold on by the power and grace of Christ, who met me in the way to

N O T E S.

* If by any means (*ἢ πως*) here, and if that I may, (*ἢ καὶ*) ver. 12, cannot be fairly understood to signify, that the apostle was in any doubt about his own final and complete salvation; since he so often speaks of his firm expectation of it: And therefore the particle (*ἢ*) if, in these places, is not to be considered as a particle of doubting, but may be rendered *that*, as it is twice together, *Acts* xxvi. 23.; and so, in the present case, it only intimates the necessity of using the means, in order to attaining the end. (See *Zanchy* and *Pierce* on this verse.)

† Already attained (*ἔλαβον*) is a different word from *might attain*, (*καταλειτουργω*) in the preceding verse. There it

alludes to persons arriving in a harbour, and is used in that sense. *Acts* xviii. 19, 24 and xxvii. 12. and xxviii. 13. But here it alludes to a victor's receiving the prize; and so this, and several other terms in the following verses, are *agognistical*, taken from the *Grecian* games, then in use; one of which was running races for a prize that was to be won; and it is in this view that we are to consider *pressing toward the mark for the prize*; (ver. 14.) not as though the prize were to be gained for the running, (see the notes on *Rom.* vi. 23. and ix. 16.) as in the *Grecian* games; but only at the end of it, as running is the necessary means, according to God's appointment, of obtaining it.

to *Damascus*, plucked me as a brand out of the fire, and took possession of me for himself, that I might be eternally saved.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

13, 14 Whatsoever others, among your judaizing boasters, may pretend to, I again, my brethren, freely acknowledge, that I do not reckon myself to have already reached to, or obtained a state of perfect holiness, any more than of perfect happiness; but mine eye is fixed upon it, as the one point in view; and in all my running for it, like racers in your neighbouring games, I do not look back to the law and my judaizing performances of it, nor to the advances I have already made in gospel-holiness; nor do I regard them, as if these attainments were sufficient, and I might stop there: But, as it were, forgetting them, and stretching forth (*εὐελπιστος*) with all my might, to come up to the further duties and exercises of grace that lie before me, I pursue my course toward Christ and heaven, according to my main scope, (*καὶ ὁμιᾶς*) fixing mine eye upon it, as archers do upon their mark, that I may reach to a state of perfect holiness, in order to my receiving the prize of eternal glory; to the obtaining of which, God has called me, and every true believer, by Christ Jesus, (2 *Thess.* ii. 14. and 1 *Pet.* v. 10.) with an high and heavenly calling, that comes from heaven, leads to it, and shall issue in it*; the glory of which is to be obtained only in and through him, with whom *our life is hid in God, that when he who is our life shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory.* (Col. iii. 3, 4.)

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

15 As many of us therefore as are, though not in all respects perfect†; yet so far advanced in Christianity, that, in a qualified sense, we may be called perfect, as all the essential parts of the new creature are formed in us, to a much greater degree than in weak believers: Let us attend to this main point of counting all things but loss for Christ, that we may be found in him, and be thoroughly conformed to him: (*ver.* 7,—11.) And if there be any of you that are right, as to this important doctrine, and yet have different sentiments from me, and from those that are like-minded with me, as to the continuance of

N O T E S.

* As in *Christ Jesus* may relate either to the *high calling of God*, or to the *prize*, the paraphrase is formed to take in both senses.

† It is plain that by *as many as be perfect*, the apostle could not mean, that were so in the strictest sense of the

expression; because he had just before said of himself, that he *was not already perfect*; and yet he here puts himself in among those that he styles perfect; and it is not to be supposed that any other Christians were more perfect than himself. (See the note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 6.)

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ ;

of the *Mosaic* law, and of *Jewish* privileges, God will clear up even this to you, and *that* ere long, when the temple and *Jewish* state shall be demolished.

16 However, leaving that matter to God, to discover it to such, in his own way and time ; as far as we severally have hitherto reached in knowledge, grace, or holiness, let us keep close to one and the same rule, and practise according to it, as it is plainly revealed in the sacred canon, (*κανον*) which, among other things, assures us, that in *Christ Jesus* neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ; but faith which works by love, or a new creature ; (Gal. v. 6. and vi. 15, 16.) and let us be unanimous in our adherence to this rule.

17 I would fain have you, my beloved brethren, concur one with another, in following my example in principle and practice, as to the fore-mentioned things, in which I follow Christ ; and let it be your great care to observe those believers, as patterns worthy of imitation, who walk according to the truth of the gospel *, after the same manner, as ye have it exemplified in myself and other ministers or Christians, that are led into the spirituality and light of the New Testament-dispensation.

18 This I would recommend with the greatest earnestness to you, to prevent your being misled and perverted by judaizing teachers : For there are many of them, of whom I frequently warned you when I was with you ; and, finding that they still continue obstinate, and are so busy among you, I now again tell you, with a grief of heart, which forces tears from mine eyes, in consideration of the dishonour brought to Christ and the gospel, and of your danger of being perverted by them, as well as of their own deplorable condition, that, whatsoever their pretences be, they are in reality, both doctrinally † and practically, the worst of all enemies to the fundamental article of salvation alone by a crucified Christ, through his atoning death, and are utterly averse to taking up their cross and following him ; all which will turn to their own confusion.

F 2

NOTES.

19 Who

* The apostle, according to his wonted wisdom and modesty, mentions the example of others, as well as his own, to prevent all appearance of ostentation, as though he would only propose himself to their imitation.

† They were doctrinal enemies to the cross of Christ, as they did not depend upon his death alone for salvation, but made circumcision, and the observation of the whole law of *Moses*, necessary to it ; and they were practical enemies to his cross, as they pleaded for *Mosaic* rites, to avoid reproach and persecution from the *Jews*, and to indulge their sensitive appetites, instead of crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts, in conformity to, and by virtue derived from, the crucifixion of Christ.

19. Whole end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

19 Who, in the winding up of things at last, will find it to issue in their eternal perdition, as they are *deceitful workers, whose end shall be according to their works*; (2 Cor. xi. 13.) Nor can it be expected to be otherwise with such sort of men, who make the gratification of carnal views and pleasures their principal aim, and so set up the pampering of their own appetites as their chief good, instead of, and in opposition to God and his glory; who also are so fond of deceiving, and making a gain of their converts to promote their secular interests, as even to boast of it, which, instead of being to their honour, is really matter of the greatest shame to them; and who attend to, relish, and pursue nothing, under all their religious profession, but mean, empty, uncertain, unsatisfying, and desiling enjoyments, that are of an earthly nature, and relate only to this lower world.

20 It is not these worthless and pernicious leaders that ye are to follow; but ye ought to imitate us, who are of a contrary spirit, temper, and behaviour, suitable to our more excellent state and character: For as we are citizens of the celestial *Jerusalem*, our hearts and affections, rising above the things of earth and sense, ascend up to heaven, and (*το ποδωλυμα*) our traffic lies in the daily correspondence we carry on there with Christ himself, (*Col. iii. 1*) from whence we also look, long, and hope for the great and only Saviour, to descend at the last day, even our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath promised to *come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.* (John xiv. 3.)

21 Who will then transform these vile and mortal bodies of ours, which carry the marks of our humiliation in their weakness, weariness, and infirmity, and in their being clogs and hindrances to the spiritual and holy exercises of the soul, since, and by means of the fall, and which will be meaner and more contemptible still in the rottenness and corruption of the grave; he will then make a glorious change upon them, that they may rise in a beautiful and shining resemblance of his own most glorious body; (see 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48, 49.) according to the wonderful energy and operation of his almighty power, which can be no less than divine, (*Acts xxvi. 8. Rom. iv. 17. and Ephes. i. 19, 20.*) by which our blessed Lord is able to overcome all difficulties, as he certainly will, in bringing every thing, that opposes him, into an entire subjection to himself, as well as in destroying the last enemy, which is death. (1 Cor. xv. 26.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What need have Christians to be often warned of seducers! Faithful ministers should never be weary of cautioning them, or of putting them upon the most diligent watch against those that carp and cavil at the purity of the gospel, and are themselves such workers of iniquity, as to be both doctrinally and practically grievous enemies to the merit, virtue, and honour of a crucified Jesus. They trust in something of their own, instead of him and his righteousness; and yet they are sensual and carnal, and even glory in the most shameful enormities, and to cut themselves off from all the blessings of the covenant of grace, and entail everlasting destruction upon themselves. But O how happy is it to be circumcised in heart, to be spiritual and evangelical worshippers of God, to rejoice and glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to place no confidence in external privileges and zeal for them; no, nor in our own moral or religious righteousness! None of these are to be set in competition with Christ, or relied upon for acceptance with God to eternal life. They are all to be laid aside as nothing; yea, as loss and dung, not as in themselves, but as set up in opposition to the saving knowledge of Christ, and being found at death and judgment in union with him, and interested in that righteousness of his, which is made over for justification through faith in him. And yet how carefully should we guard against neglecting sanctification and holiness, which are as necessary to our enjoying God, as justification itself! And how desirous ought we to be of having such a knowledge of Christ, as shall be a means of deriving virtue from his death and resurrection, to make us conformable to him in both, by dying unto sin, and living unto God! The most eminent believers upon earth are far from being perfect herein; and therefore, without taking up with present attainments, should be continually pressing onwards after a perfection in all knowledge, grace, and holiness, till they shall reach it, at the end of their race, in a better world, according to what Christ designed them for, when he laid hold of them by his Spirit. Though some Christians are more advanced in light and experience than others; yet they all ought to be of the same mind, with respect to these important points; and, as far as they have attained, should walk together in brotherly love, and according to the rule of God's word: And if there be any thing of less consequence, in which their sentiments differ, they should bear with one another, and leave it to God to convince those that are mistaken, as to such things, after all proper methods have been unsuccessfully tried, in the spirit of meekness, to set them right. How ambitious should we be of carefully observing, and copying after those, who, like the apostle, set us the most laudable example; whose hearts, affections, and conversation are much in heaven, like citizens of that holy and delightful state, where Jesus our Saviour lives in all his glory; and from whence believers look, with longing desire and hope, for his return to take them up thither! And O what an amazingly happy change will he then make upon these frail, contemptible, and mortal bodies! He will then form them into the likeness of his own most glorious body, by an act of divine Omnipotence, which surmounts all difficulties, and by which he himself is, and will prove to be able to vanquish death, and all his and our enemies.

C H A P. IV.

The apostle most affectionately exhorts the Philippians to stand fast in the Lord, ver. 1. Gives directions to some particular persons among them, and to them all in general, 2,—9. Expresses his great satisfaction in the supply they had sent him, and his own contentment in every condition of life, adding a doxology to God the Father, 10,—20. Salutes them, and sends the salutations of others; and closes all with his usual benediction, 21,—23.

TEXT.

Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved

PARAPHRASE.

AS, therefore, ye have hitherto continued in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, and given good proof

beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, to stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

proof of your holy obedience; (*chap. i. 5. and ii. 12.*) and as I have exhorted you to follow my example in a persevering dependence on Christ, and pressing toward perfection, till we get to heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, (*chap. iii. 8.—21.*) I earnestly entreat you, my brethren in the faith, to abide stedfast, and unshaken in your fiducial adherence to, and holy profession of the Lord Jesus, and in his strength, as your Head and Saviour, whatever difficulties and dangers ye may be exposed to for it; and I do this with the greatest affection to, and hope concerning you, who, in consideration of your commendable behaviour hitherto, are so greatly endeared to me, that I most heartily love you, and long for your further establishment and proficiency, as also for an opportunity of seeing you again, (*chap. i. 8.*) as the dear seals of my ministry, whom I think of as my joy and crown of rejoicing now, and as to be yet more abundantly so, in the *presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.* (1 Thess. ii. 19.) In the thoughts of which, I want words sufficient to express the ardors and overflowings of my heart to you*, my most affectionately beloved friends and brethren in the Lord.

1 I beseech Euodias, and I beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

2 I in a particular manner recommend it to Euodias, and do the same to Syntyche †, that they, laying aside all differences, unanimously agree one with another, and with the whole church in love and affection, and in the doctrines of Christ; in their adherence to them; and in a becoming profession of them.

3 And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which laboured

3 And I earnestly beseech you, my sincere and faithful companion, who cheerfully draw in the same yoke with myself, for promoting the interest of Christ ‡, that you would do your utmost to help forward

N O T E S.

* What a pile of words does the apostle here heap up to express the fervors of his love to these *Philippians*, and ingratiate himself, after his usual manner, with them; as though they, and they only, had ingrossed his affections.

† Euodias and Syntyche are most commonly thought to have been two women of note, that had been considerably eminent in the church, but were now at variance one with the other, and had been tampered with by the *Jewish* zealous, to pervert them; and therefore the apostle entreated them to be reconciled one to the other, and to continue stedfast in the faith, and united with the church.

‡ Who it was that the apostle calls *true yoke-fellow*, though well known to the church at *Philippi*, is variously conjectured, with great uncertainty, at this distance of time. Some suppose that it was the husband, or brother of one of the women before-mentioned; others, that it was some noted companion, or fellow-labourer of the apostle's; and others, that it really was his wife, they supposing him to be a married man. (See Mr. *Pierce's* note.) And it seems to me, that the help which the apostle desired this person to give Euodias and Syntyche, related to a misunderstanding that was between them.

laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

ward this good design, in the most prudent, tender, and affectionate manner, by advising and exhorting these two eminent women, heartily to unite in the common cause again, who were very diligent and assistant to me, though not in public ministrations, yet in subserving my work of preaching the gospel, by private instructions and prayers, by their exemplary behaviour, and their sympathizing and undergoing great labour and sufferings with me, and taking care of me in all my wants and trials, while I was engaged in that work at *Philippi*; and who were alike serviceable to the excellent *Clement**, and several others of my brethren in the ministry, that have embarked in the same glorious cause, and taken great pains together with me, in spreading the gospel; and of whom I am verily persuaded, from what appears of the grace of God in them, that they are favourites of heaven; as certainly and particularly chosen of God to eternal life, from the foundation of the world, as if their names had been registered, or inrolled in a book, among the appointed heirs of salvation. (*Rev. xvii. 8.*)

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

4 As to the whole body of true believers among you, it is your duty and privilege, considering all the blessings ye have in hand and in hope, to rejoice and triumph, not after a carnal, but spiritual manner, in the Lord Jesus your Head and Saviour, as I have already told you, (*chap. iii. 1.*) and now repeat it, that ye may do so on all occasions, and in all circumstances, whatever sufferings or tribulations ye may be exposed to on his account. I say unto you now again, that, even in the midst of them all, it is your great duty and privilege to rejoice in the Lord, and in your sufferings for his sake, (*chap. i. 28, 29.* and *1 Pet. iv. 13, 14.*) which, being patiently endured, are an honour to him and yourselves, and will finally turn to your own best account.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

5 Maintain and discover a meek, patient, and gentle temper of spirit (*το πραύτης*) towards all men, and particularly toward your very persecutors themselves; and a weariedness of affection from the things of this life, as knowing that the Lord Jesus is near at hand to observe your behaviour, and take your part; and will soon appear to the confusion of your *Jewish* adversaries, at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and will come, ere long, as the Judge of the whole world, to put an end to the present state of things, and all your afflictions,

* N O T E.

* Who this *Clement* was, whether *Clement Romanus*, or some other, is very uncertain, and of no importance for us to know.

afflictions, and to do justice to your righteous cause, and *render tribulation to them that trouble you.* (2 Theff. i. 6.)

6 Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

6 Whatever difficulties, wants, or dangers may befall you, relating to this present world, take heed that ye do not perplex yourselves with anxious, cutting, distrustful, and distracting cares about any of them, (*μὴδὲν μεριμνᾶτε*) how ye shall be able, either to bear up under them, or to avoid them, or get through them: But as a remedy against this, (*ὡς παρὰ*) in every time and circumstance of things, be they ever so afflictive, let your addresses be presented to God, who loves to hear you telling him the desires of your hearts, (though he perfectly knows them all before-hand,) that ye may own your entire dependence upon him, and pay the religious homage due to him; and that he may glorify his own name, as a God hearing prayer. Let this be done with all sorts of humble petitions and pleas, and with believing, earnest importunity and perseverance, in deprecating evils that ye are attended with, or in danger of, and in imploring the blessings ye need; as also with cheerful gratitude, and high ascriptions of glory to him, under a sense of your own unworthiness, and of the riches and freeness of his goodness and grace, for all the mercies that ye enjoy and hope for, in your very worst condition, which might be worse still, relating to this world and that which is to come.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

7 And, in answer to your humble importunity, and believing requests, the most excellent peace, which God gives and approves of; peace with him, as your reconciled God and Father through his beloved Son, together with a sweet sense of it in your own souls; peace of conscience through the atoning blood of Jesus; peace with one another; and the peace of a sanctified heart, and of a quiet calmness of spirit with regard to all other persons and things; even that peace which exceeds all adequate conceptions of believers themselves, much more of those that have not experienced it. This most excellent peace, whatsoever ye may suffer in the body, will defend and guard your hearts, as in a strong garrison, (*ὡς πύργος*) and fortify your minds with a holy composure; and so preserve your whole souls from sinning, or fainting under your troubles, and from apostatizing by means of them; against which ye will be secured through the knowledge of Christ, and your union with him, as your Head and Saviour, and through his merit and sufferings for you.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things

8 To close with a recommendation of some general duties to you, my brethren beloved in the Lord; whatsoever

things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

whatsoever things are true and sincere in words and actions, professions and engagements, and are agreeable to the word of truth, and the reason of things, free from all hypocrisy and deceit: Whatsoever things are venerable, decent, and becoming, in dress, language, and deportment, according to your respective stations and relations, as men and Christians: Whatsoever things are just and due to God and man, in all your dealings with him and them: Whatsoever things belong to chastity and purity of mind, free from all defilement of sin in heart, speech, and behaviour: Whatsoever things are of an amiable nature, and render the subjects and practisers of them lovely in the eyes of God and man: Whatsoever things are deemed reputable, especially by the sober, wise, and religious part of mankind, among whom *a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.* (Prov. xxii. 1.) If there be any thing, as undoubtedly there is, in all this, or in whatsoever may be supposed to be added to it of a moral nature, in the whole compass of natural and revealed religion, that is truly virtuous, brave, and laudable; let these things dwell habitually upon your minds; and often reflect upon them, and study their nature, obligation, and importance, in order to your putting them into practice upon Christian principles, by divine assistance, to the glory of God, and the credit of your holy profession of Christ's name, and to your own and others good.

9 Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

9 These and such like excellent things, relating to a holy life and conversation, in all the duties of morality, as well as of piety, which ye have acquired the knowledge of, (*μαθηται*) as the disciples of Jesus, and have professed to assent and consent to, and approve, as right and fit for regulating your own conduct; and which ye have been taught by my public ministry, and private instructions, and have seen exemplified in my own walk and behaviour, when I was with you. Attend seriously unto these things, and reduce them into practice: And in this way, God, who is at peace with you through the blood of Jesus, and is the author of all inward peace; and who delights in the prosperity of his servants, and in their orderly deportment, as becomes the gospel, will take pleasure to dwell among you, to manifest himself to you, as your God, and to own and bless you, as a people near and dear to him.

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath

10 But, to give further vent to the grateful sense I have of your kind and Christian regards to me, I cannot tell how to forbear repeating the great satisfaction and joy of my soul, in reflecting on the love and grace of our Lord Jesus, who inclined your

flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things thro' Christ which

hearts to act a friendly and affectionate part toward me for his sake now again, after your former generosity, (*ver.* 15, 16.) and after your seeming neglect of me since that time; inasmuch as your concern for supplying my wants, in my imprisonment and difficulties, has now, at length, visibly revived, and discovered itself with vigour, (*ανδραλεις*) like a good tree, that seemed barren in the winter, but sprouts again in the spring, and brings forth fruit in its season: For I find ye were all along solicitously thoughtful about sending to my relief, only your circumstances did not admit of your doing it so soon as ye desired; and ye had no opportunity of conveying your liberality to me.

11 I do not mention these things, as though I were reduced to insupportable wants, or were uneasy under those that attended me; or as though I rejoiced only, because they are now supplied by your bounty; no, these things are of little account with me: For, through the vicissitude of my affairs, and a sanctified use of them by divine grace, I have been taught and enabled to learn and practise the great lesson of Christian contentment in every state and condition of this life, into which Providence brings me; as being fully satisfied, that my heavenly Father orders what is best for me, and that he *will never leave, nor forsake me*; (*Heb.* xiii. 5.) and as having, upon this principle, a sufficiency in myself (*αυταρχης*) of all joy and peace in believing, which supplies the want of temporal good things.

12 In this manner I am brought to learn the happy and holy skill of possessing my own soul in peace and patience, when I am thrown into the most contemptible and humbling circumstances, that I may not be dejected and discomposed by them; and I understand the way of behaving without elation of mind, or being over-pleased and lifted up, when Providence smiles upon me: Wherever I am, and into what situation of things soever I be cast, I am well initiated in the sacred knowledge (*μυστηρια*) of conducting with an equal and becoming temper of spirit: When I am refreshed and filled with provisions for bodily sustenance; and when I am hungry for want of them; yea, when I have the greatest affluence of the good things of this life; and when I am in the greatest degree destitute of them, I am taught to exercise the graces, and perform the duties, that belong to these different and contrary lots and conditions, as to external matters.

13 Not that I am so vain-glorious, as to think that I can do these great things of myself, or even merely

which strengtheneth me.

merely by the strength of the grace that I have already received ; but I find, by daily experience, that I am enabled to perform, not only these, but every other duty that I am called to, as a Christian and an apostle, through the continual concurring aids and assistances of Christ, by virtue of my union with him, in whose grace I am strong, (2 *Tim.* ii. 1.) and who is ever with me to animate, excite, and strengthen me for them.

14 Notwithstanding, ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction.

14 However, this does not at all lessen your kindness to me, and concern for me ; nor detract from the seasonableness of your bounty : Ye have acted a truly Christian part, which is very acceptable to me, and to God himself through Jesus Christ ; (*ver.* 18.) because of the love which ye have testified to the Lord, and to me, his prisoner and servant, in that ye sympathized with me in my bonds and tribulations, and sent a liberal and suitable supply for my relief under them.

15 Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

15 And, (as) to shew the grateful sense I have, my dear *Philippian*-brethren, of all your kindness to me, I mention it to your honour, and take pleasure in reminding you of it, that not now of late only, but also when I was first in your parts, and preached the gospel to you ; and particularly when I was about to take my leave of you *, and to go from your *Macedonian*-province into other countries, to labour there in the work of the Lord, no other church besides yours contributed to my support, that as I freely gave, and they received spiritual things, so they might give, and I receive of their temporal things ; which certainly ought to have been done by other churches ; (1 *Tim.* v. 17, 18.) though, that I might not seem mercenary, I never asked it of them. But great was your liberality.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

16 For even while I was ministering at *Thessalonica*, where I met with the most violent and outrageous opposition from the unbelieving *Jews*, (*Acts* xvii. 5, &c.) and was not supplied with necessities by the Christians of that rich city, but was obliged to labour with my own hands, (1 *Thess.* ii. 9. and 2d *Epist.* iii. 8.) ye, from time to time, sent generous contributions for my comfortable subsistence, in the pressing circumstances that then attended me.

G 2

17 I

N O T E.

* This should be rendered, according to the latitude of the tense, (οὐκ ἔλαβον) when I was about to go from Macedonia : For *Thessalonica* was the chief city of Macedonia ; and the apostle here mentions their sending to his relief, while he was there, and speaks of it to their

great commendation, that they, and they only should do it, while he was in such an opulent city, and, through the neglect of the Christians there, was forced to work with his own hands for a livelihood.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

17 I do not mention these things as a fetch to get still more of you, as if I would desire you now to do any thing further of this kind for me; no, but my great aim in making this grateful acknowledgment is, that it might be a means of encouraging you to go on with your Christian generosity and benevolence, in all other cases, for promoting the cause of Christ, as the genuine fruit of your faith, and love to him and to his people, every where, as there may be occasion; fruit, that will turn, as to his honour in this world, so to your own rich advantage in the great day of account, for the world to come. (See *Matth. xxv. 35,—40.* and *Heb. vi. 10, 18.*)

18 But, as to myself in particular, I have all that I need for corporal sustenance; and what ye have now sent is abundantly sufficient to supply my wants: I have as much as I wish for; and my soul is as full of joy and praise, as my body is refreshed with your benevolence; having received, as I hereby thankfully acknowledge, a repeated testimony of your affection, and a substantial proof of it in the collections which ye sent me by the hands of your faithful and beloved messenger *Epaphroditus*, which, to allude to the offerings under the law, (*Lev. ii. 1, 2.* and *iii. 16.*) are an odour of a sweet smelling savour, a spiritual sacrifice of acknowledgment to God, which he accepts, and is highly pleased with, through Jesus Christ. (*Heb. xiii. 16.* and *1 Pet. ii. 5.*)

19 And though, in my poor circumstances, I am not able to make you any temporal recompence; yet my covenant-God and Father, who hath inclined your hearts to shew all this kindness to me, will not suffer you to be losers by what ye do for him, or for any of his saints and servants for his sake; but will make you rich returns, not only with such temporal good things as he sees to be needful and best for you; but especially with all spiritual and eternal blessings, that are suited to your various wants; and he will do this in a glorious manner, with an abundant liberality, like himself, in proportion to his own infinite treasures of grace and glory, which he has provided in Christ, and gives with him, not for any worthiness in yourselves, but on account of his mediation, and by virtue of your union and communion with him, as your Head and Saviour.

20 Now unto this all-sufficient and glorious God, who is the God of nature, and of providence and grace, and the giver of all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, and is our Father in Christ Jesus, let us jointly ascribe all possible honour, thanksgiving, blessing, and praise, from henceforth to all eternity, as

is most due, both on account of what he is in himself, and has been, is, and for ever will be to us; in testimony of our hearty concurrence herein, may we all add, *Amen.*

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

21 Let my most cordial and Christian love be acceptable to all, that are professionally, and I trust really renewed and sanctified, as members of Christ, in union with him, for whose sake, I heartily wish that all prosperity for both worlds may attend them. All my brethren in the ministry *, that are with me at Rome, desire to be also most kindly remembered to you.

22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household.

22 Yea, all the professing believers in these parts, who in charity are looked upon as sanctified by the Holy Ghost, send the like assurances of their love and Christian respects to you: And more especially the converts that have been made from among the domestics of Nero, the emperor, and continue their civil stations in his family, are so far from being ashamed to own you, that they desire me to acquaint you with their affectionate esteem of you, and fervent prayers for your present and eternal welfare.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

23 To conclude, as I began, (*chap. i. 2.*) my great desire and prayer for all and every one of you is, that the free favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, yours and mine, may be ever toward you, and be manifested in all its peculiar, abundant, and distinguishing fruits and effects to each of you singly, and to all of you jointly, as a church, both in this world and for ever in the next, *Amen.* So I heartily wish it may be, and humbly trust it will be.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what affectionate love and joy do the ministers of Christ think of the saints, as brethren, whose names are inrolled in the book of life, and who shew benevolent regards to themselves, as occasions require! How grateful are they in their acknowledgments of the kindness of their Christian friends, not from a selfish temper, but from a desire, that they may bring forth spiritual fruits of faith and love, which shall turn to their own best account! And how earnestly concerned are they for the establishment of Christians in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; for their continual comfort in the profession of it; and for their union in heart, design, and labour, to help forward the work of the Lord! And O how patient towards enemies, and how weaned from this world, should they be, in view and hope, that the Lord Jesus will soon put an end to all their troubles, and set every thing to rights in the day of judgment! They neither need, nor ought to be anxiously solicitous about any of the affairs of this life; but should commit all their concerns, by faith, in prayer to God, with thanksgivings for his many mercies to them; and, in this way, the most excellent peace which God himself will give them through Jesus Christ, and which inexpressibly surpasses all others, and all adequate conceptions, will compose, fortify, and guard their hearts against all tribulations.

N O T E.

* I have considered these *brethren* as the *saints*, whose salutations are sent in meant, not of private Christians, but of the next verse; (and see the note on *ministers*, to distinguish them from all *Col. iv. 12.*)

bulations and fears. But O how concerned should they be to cultivate and abound in every thing that is decent and becoming, just and equitable, pure and holy, amiable and excellent in itself; yea, and in whatsoever is justly deemed a reputation to the Christian character among all sorts of men! If we are enabled to practise these things, as they have been exemplified in the great apostle, we may depend upon it, that God will delight to dwell with us, and manifest himself to us, as our reconciled God and Father. And O what a high attainment in Christianity is it, when we have learned how to behave as becomes us, in prosperity and adversity, in fulness and in want; and to be thoroughly contented in every trying circumstance of life! And yet, great as this attainment is, every true believer may come up to it, through Christ's strengthenings, as well as the apostle himself: And when they are brought to this, they, though grateful to their benefactors like him, think they have enough, and abound in all that is good for them, and are full of sweet contentment in their own souls; and they are satisfied that their God will supply all their real wants, for time and eternity, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. And O how abundant must that supply be, which is answerable to his infinite inexhaustible riches, in giving like a God! How cordially should Christian-salutations pass between the saints in Christ Jesus, in their conversing together, and writing to one another! How affectionately should they wish and pray, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may be with all of this character! And how cheerfully unite in ascribing glory to God, their heavenly Father, for ever and ever! *Amen.* So let it be; and so it will be with all that sincerely love him.

A P R A C

A PRACTICAL
EXPOSITION
OF THE
APOSTLE PAUL'S EPISTLE
TO THE
COLOSSIANS,
IN THE FORM OF A
PARAPHRASE.

THE PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

COLOSSÆ was a great and populous city of *Phrygia*; and this Epistle is generally thought to have been wrote by the apostle *Paul* to the church there, during his first imprisonment at *Rome*, about the same time with those that were sent to the *Ephefians* and *Philippians*. Hence many of the sentiments and expressions, in all these epistles, are much of the same strain, the occasions being much alike; and the apostle's mind and heart being then full of those thoughts which he took pleasure in communicating to the churches; and so they cast a light one upon the others: Only there seems to be this difference between the churches at *Epheesus* and *Philippi*, and this at *Colosse*, that the apostle had been personally among them, and not among the *Colossians*; for, in this Epistle, he mentions *only* his having *heard of their faith in Christ Jesus*; and *of the love which they had to all the saints*; (chap. i. 4.) and speaks of *the great conflict he had for them, and for those at Laodicea, and as many as had not seen his face in the flesh*; (chap. ii. 1.) which, by the most natural construction of the sentence, includes those of *Colosse*, as persons that had never seen him; and he takes notice of *Epaphras*, as a *dear fellow-servant, who was for them a faithful minister of Christ, from whom they had learned the doctrine of the grace of God in truth*, (chap. i. 6, 7.) and who *was one of themselves*. (Chap. iv. 12.) From hence some conclude, that *Epaphras* was the first that planted the gospel, and gathered the church at *Colosse*: But it is uncertain, whether it were he or any other minister. However, as they were, I think, mostly a *Gentile* church, and the apostle was made a minister, in a special manner, to the *Gentiles*, according to the dispensation of God, which was given to him, (chap. i. 25,—27.) his principal view was to establish these *Colossians* in the faith of the gospel, against the attempts of *judaizing* teachers to bring

bring them into a subjection to the law of *Moses*, as necessary for salvation

He accordingly begins the Epistle with his usual salutation, and thanksgiving to God for what he had heard of their faith, love, and hope, and prays for their practical proficiency in the knowledge of Christ, of whom, and of whose grace to them, he gives the most exalted ideas, to engage their adherence to him, according to the gospel; (*chap. i.*) then proceeds to discover his great concern for their further establishment in Christ, and for their being guarded against those errors of philosophy and judaism that interfered with their relation to, and benefit by him. (*Chap. ii.*) And on supposition that, according to their profession, they were really risen with Christ, he exhorts them to heavenly mindedness, mortification of sin, Christian love, humility, and several relative duties, together with prayer and circumspection; and sends an account of the state of his own affairs at *Rome* by *Tychicus* and *Onesimus*, with salutations from several, of whom he gives high encomiums; and concludes with an order for this Epistle to be read by them, and by the church of *Laodicea*, and for giving a charge to *Archippus* to take heed to his ministry; and with his ordinary benediction. (*Chap. iii. iv.*)

C H A P. I.

The apostle Paul salutes the Colossians, ver. 1. 2. Blesses God for their faith, love, and hope, which Epaphras had reported to him, 3,—8. Prays for their fruitfulness in spiritual knowledge, 9,—13. Gives a magnificent view of Christ, and of his grace to them, to engage their adherence to him, 14,—23. And sets out his own character, as the apostle of the Gentiles, 24,—29.

TEXT.

PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL, who is an apostle of Jesus Christ to bear a special witness to him, as having seen him since his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven; (*1 Cor. xv. 8.* see the note there,) and who has not taken this office upon himself of his own head, nor was put into it by the authority of men; but was immediately called by Christ himself to fulfil it among the *Gentiles*, (*ver. 25,—27.*) not according to his own deserts, but according to the free purpose, commandment, and pleasure of God the Father, * sends greeting; and the beloved Timothy, a faithful

NOTE.

* The apostle asserts his being put into office, by the will of God the Father, the more effectually to obviate the objections of the false apostles against it; and he joins Timothy with himself, not to add to his own authority, but to strengthen Timothy's among the *Colossians*; and he here, with great modesty and prudence, calls him *his brother*, rather than *his son*, that he might the better raise their regards to him. (*Vid. Zanchy in loc. and the note on 1 Cor. i. 1.*)

faithful brother in the ministry, concurs in all that is hereafter written.

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We heartily join in Christian salutations to all the professing saints, whom we, in the judgment of charity, account to be holy persons, and whom we consider as sincere brethren in union with Christ, and faithful believers in him; we particularly mean all of these excellent characters that reside at the great city of *Colosse* in the province of *Phrygia*, and that ordinarily assemble for religious worship there. Our heart's desire and prayer for you is, that the divine favour, and all manner of prosperity, as its fruits and effects, may abound toward you from God, our common Father, the original fountain of all blessings; and from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has purchased all good things, that they might be freely given to you, in full consistence with the rights of divine justice; and who, in concurrence with the Father, authoritatively and effectually confers them upon you.

3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

3 We most affectionately unite in thanksgiving and praise to God on your behalf, whom we address, for the encouragement of our faith, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great and only Mediator; and so, as our reconciled God and Father through him: And we, on all occasions, present our supplications, together with our thanksgivings, to him for you in every prayer. (*Phil. i. 4.*)

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints;

4 This we have done ever since we received an account of your cordially accepting of, and trusting in Christ alone for all salvation; and were informed of the genuine fruits of your faith, as manifested in the brotherly affection which ye have discovered various ways towards all the professors of his name, that bear his holy image, and so prove themselves to be sanctified by his Spirit.

5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

5 Our prayers and praises are thus engaged for you*, as your own faith and love also are to Christ and all the saints, in consideration of the perfect blessedness which ye justly hope for through him, and is laid up and hid with him in God, (*chap. iii. 3.*) as a rich treasure uses to be by a father for his children, and is reserved and secured in heaven for you; which heavenly happiness ye heard of before now, when *the gospel of your salvation*, (*Ephes. i. 13.*) that true and faithful word of God, was first preached unto you.

6 Which

N O T E.

* For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven may denote, either the reason of the apostle's prayer and thanksgiving for them, or of their faith in

Christ, and love to all the saints; and therefore both senses are taken into the paraphrase.

6 Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful

6 Which gospel, in the publication of it, has, by the good providence of God, been carried to you, without your seeking after it, as it has been to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, all over the *Roman* empire, according to Christ's commission; (*Mark* xvi. 15.) and, by the attending power of the Spirit, is an effectual means of making converts among them, and of their bringing forth the best of fruit, even faith, love, and obedience in them; as it likewise evidently doth in you, ever since ye were favoured with opportunities of hearing it, and were experimentally acquainted with a real work of divine grace in your own souls, and were led into the knowledge of the doctrine of the grace of God, and embraced it with a sincere faith, as the truth is in Jesus.

7 According to what ye also (*καὶ οὗτος καὶ*) were instructed in, particularly by your worthy minister, *Epaphras*, whom we own and esteem, as a dear brother and faithful labourer in the gospel-cause and kingdom of Christ, for his glory and the good of immortal souls; and who is in a special manner a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, that seeks not yours, but you; and lays himself out, with conscientious care and diligence, for your spiritual benefit. (See the note on *Phil.* ii. 25.)

8 And who, to testify his great affection to you, has taken an opportunity of acquainting us with your hearty love to Christ, to us, and to all the saints, which the Holy Spirit has wrought in you, and drawn forth in a spiritual manner, and on spiritual accounts, by means of the gospel.

9 In reflection therefore on the pleasing report, that *Epaphras* has given of your faith and love, we have ever since been excited to bear you continually upon our hearts, in every solemn prayer; and, in a special manner, to beg of God for you, that ye may be yet more and more enlarged in, till your whole hearts are filled with, the knowledge of his mind and will, relating to the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, and to your own comfort and duty, as interested therein; that ye may abound exceedingly in a judicious, experimental, and practical acquaintance with his manifold wisdom, which conducts his will; and in all spiritual discerning of spiritual things, as to their truth, excellence, and importance, and as to the good and holy use which ye ought to make of them.

10 That in the whole of your walk before God, according to his ordinances and commandments, and in all your conversation in the world, ye may continually behave as *becomes the gospel of Christ*, (*Phil.*

ful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God ;

i. 27.) and act up to the dignity of your relation to, and profession of him, and to the rich benefits ye have, and hope for from him ; and every way agreeable to his holy nature and will, and acceptable in all things to him, by bringing forth every fruit of righteousness, like plants of the Lord's right-hand planting; that he may be glorified, (*Isa.* lxi. 3.) and by being still more and more progressive in a transforming acquaintance and communion with God, as your heavenly Father and Friend.

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness ;

11 We also pray that ye may be abundantly strengthened with all needful aids and assistances of his Spirit, for performing every duty and service, and for sustaining every trial and conflict, according to the working of his mighty power ; which he exerts, like a God, in a glorious manner toward you, that ye may be enabled to exercise all patience, in a sweet composure of spirit, and possession of your own souls in peace, at all times, and under all afflictions, without any murmuring at the hand of God, or under the highest provocations from men ; and may be helped to hold on your way, and hold out to the end, with a noble constancy and fortitude of soul, in submitting unto the will of God, and bearing injuries ; and in doing all this with holy joy and triumph, in consideration of the great things that God has done for you, of his being continually with you, to support, strengthen, and comfort you, and of the glory that is set before you.

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light :

12 This calls for praise, instead of complaints, under all your tribulations ; and as ye ought to abound in that delightful tribute to the God of all your mercies ; so we heartily join in the most grateful thanksgivings for you, as well as for ourselves, to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father in him, who hath prepared and formed us for the heavenly state and world, (*2 Cor.* v. 5.) by working in us feverally all spiritual, holy, and heavenly propensions and desires after, and fitness for the glorious inheritance which he has graciously appointed and provided for us, and has promised, and will give to us, as the inheritance of sons ; an inheritance, which is all light, glory, and joy ; and which, to allude to the sovereign manner of his disposing of the land of *Canaan* to *Israel*, he will give possession of, as it were by lot, to all those, and those only, that are sanctified by his Spirit here, and shall be all over covered with the light of knowledge, holiness, and happiness, in his immediate presence hereafter, where they shall see *light in his light*. (*Psal.* xxxvi. 9.)

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

13 Who has plucked us that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, as brands out of the fire; and rescued us with a mighty hand, (*ἡγοῦσα*) like Lot out of Sodom, from the tyranny and dominion of sin, which is darkness itself, (1 John i. 6.) and of Satan, (*ἄλλ'ς* xxvi. 18.) who is the prince of darkness, and had taken us captive at his will; and this gracious God has wrought a happy change in our temper and state, by making us a willing people in the day of his power, (Psal. cx. 3.) and bringing us into the kingdom of grace, which is erected by, and is under the influence and government of, his eminently beloved Son, even the Son of his most peculiar and highest love, (*τὸ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀγαπῶντος αὐτὸν*) in order to his advancing us to the kingdom of glory through him.

14 In whom we have the best of all deliverances, by the price of redemption, which he paid in shedding his precious blood, and giving his life a ransom for us, even a complete discharge from the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law, which includes, and brings after it, a deliverance from the power of sin and Satan, and from the wrath to come, that sin had deserved; as also an inheritance of all spiritual and eternal blessings, that sin had forfeited: And we may be well assured of the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood for this purpose, according to the riches of the Father's grace, (*Ephes. i. 7.* see the notes there) from the dignity of his person, and the excellency of his office.

15 As to the dignity of his person, which adds an infinite value to his sacrifice, he, in his divine nature, is the exact likeness of the person of God the Father, as one in essence and perfections with him; and he accordingly, in his incarnation, and office-qualifications and performances, is the representative image of his Father, who being a pure Spirit, is absolutely invisible in his own nature; so that no man hath seen or can see him: (John i. 18.) And this divine person existed from all eternity, as having been in a peculiar inconceivable manner begotten * of the Father, before

N O T E

* The words, (*ἡγοῦσα* *γεννη* *πρῶτος*) rendered the first born of every creature, signify also born, or begotten before all creation: Or (as *Isidore* an ancient Greek writer observed) if the accent of the word (*ἡγοῦσα*) be placed on the last syllable but one, instead of the last but two, it signifies not passively, the first begotten, but actively the first begetter, or former of all things; and in proof of Christ's being so, it is

added in the next words, For by him were all things created; and ver. 17. it is said, not that he was made, but that he is before all things. (Vid. *Isid. lib. 3. epist. 31.*) In the first way of understanding this passage, according to our translation, it relates to Christ's office, as head of the church: In the second, it relates to what is usually called the eternal generation of the Son: In the third, it relates to his being the efficient

before any creature was brought into being; and is, inseparably with him, the former of all things; and consequently the original Lord and Heir of all, according to the ancient rights of the first-born.

16 For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him.

16 For by him, as the efficient cause, together with the Father and Spirit, all things, that are not God, were brought forth out of nothing into being, (see the notes on *John* i. 3.) even all creatures, that are in the heaven of heavens, and in the starry heaven and the air, and that inhabit or belong to the earth and sea; all visible and invisible things whatsoever; all the highest ranks and individuals of angels in heaven, and of men upon earth, whether for dignity and authority in those respective worlds*, they be styled *thrones*, in allusion to the royal seats of princes; or *dominions*, that have rule and government committed to them under any form whatsoever; or *principalities*, that are in high and noble stations; or *powers*, that are great in any kind of authority and influence: Yea, and all inferior as well as higher orders of creatures, down to the smallest atom, were brought into being by his creating power, as their original cause: And all of them, from the highest to the lowest, were created for him, as their ultimate end; that he, together with the Father and Spirit, might one way or other be glorified in, and by them, as they are the works of his hand, and shall be made subservient to the designs of his mediatorial kingdom.

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

17 And this carries an undeniable demonstration, that he had a prior existence to all creatures whatsoever: And as we are said to *live, move, and have our being in God*; (*Acts* xvii. 28.) so all things do alike subsist, stand, or continue *in him*, (*in auro*) who is omnipresent, all-powerful, and active, in his providential influence over them; as they are continually preserved in being, and in their regular frame and order, and are animated and upheld, by the same *word of his power*, (*Heb.* i. 3.) which at first called them into existence, and which he now exerts, as Head over all things to the church. (*Ephes.* i. 22.)

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is

18 And as to the *excellency of his office* in human nature, which he assumed into personal union with himself, this same great and glorious person is not only

NOTES.

efficient cause, or the Creator of all things; and in all these views he is considered in the following verses.

* *Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers*, are terms often used to signify the highest orders of angels; and, perhaps, may here most immediately

design them: But as they are also used to signify the highest ranks of men, it still further widens the argument, and, I think, there can be no impropriety in it, if we also include them. (See Dr. Hammond's note here.)

is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

ly the political head of direction, authority, and government, in like manner as a king is the head of the state; but he is also the head of vital influence, by his word and spirit, to the church, (which is as intimately united to him as the natural body is to its head) to communicate all spiritual life, nourishment, growth, and activity to all, and every member of it, the whole of which spiritual body is the relative *fulness of him that filleth all in all*, (Eph. i. 22, 23.) he accordingly is the head and original, as of the spiritual life of their souls, so of the resurrection of their bodies to eternal life; being himself the first that arose from the dead to immortal life, and *that* by his own power, as the pledge and pattern, quickening cause and first-fruits of the resurrection of all those that sleep in him: (1 Cor. xv. 20.; see the notes there.) And he is thus the Lord of the dead and the living, (Rom. xiv. 9.) that he in all things might be preferred, exalted, and dignified of God, and esteemed by the church, in his mediatorial capacity (as he really is in himself) above all angels, and above all the saints, whom he condescends to call his brethren. (Rom. viii. 29.)

19 For it pleased *the Father*, that in him should all fulness dwell.

19 For, in the economy of salvation, it has seemed good in God the Father's sight, and he of his own infinitely wise, gracious, and holy pleasure, and in honour to his Son, and in love to his people, has ordained, that, correspondent to the excellency of Christ's divine person, and the greatness of his mediatorial work *, an all-fulness of gifts and graces, merit and righteousness, light and power, should dwell permanently in him, with the utmost perfection, not for himself only, but likewise to be communicated to every member of his spiritual body, that *of his fulness they all may receive grace for grace*, (John i. 16.) and that he may *fill all things*, and be *all in all*. (Ephes. i. 23. and iv. 10.)

20 And (having made peace through the blood

20 And God the Father, (having, through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, (ver. 14.) which he shed in his painful, shameful, and ac-

curled

N O T E.

* *This all fulness*, which dwells in Christ, seems evidently to signify, not the original fulness of his deity, but his *mediatorial* dispensatory fulness, which he received of his Father in his human nature and office-capacity; for his original fulness is *essentially necessary to him*, and inseparable from him, as God, and does not depend upon the *mere good-will and pleasure* of the Father; but the fulness, here mentioned, is what we are

told *it pleased the Father should dwell in him*, and is placed amidst that part of the apostle's description of him which relates most immediately to his *office-character*; and the expressions used, *chap. ii. 9.* to signify the inhabitation of the deity in the man Jesus, is much stronger, and without any hint of *will and pleasure*, as the cause of it, where it is said, *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. (See the note there.)

of his cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, *I say*, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

curfed death of the cross, removed the enmity, and made up the breach, which sin had caused between him and his church) it hath pleased him, by this their Head and Mediator, to bring them all into a state of friendship and favour with himself *: It has been, *I say*, the good pleasure of his will to reconcile them to himself, by the peace-making sacrifice of Christ,

N O T E.

* *God's reconciling all things to himself, whether in earth, or in heaven*, does not, *I apprehend*, include the holy angels, who, having never sinned, cannot be said to be reconciled to God; but relates only to all the saints, whether on earth, or in heaven, who needed to be reconciled after the breach that sin had made between God and them.—When the scripture speaks of reconciliation by Christ, or by his cross, blood, or death, it is commonly expressed by *God's reconciling us to himself*, and not by *his being reconciled to us*; the reason of which seems to be, because God is the offended party, and we are the offenders, who, as such, have need to be reconciled to him; and the price of reconciliation, by the blood of Christ, is paid to him, and not to us. *Grotius* observes, that in heathen authors, *men's being reconciled to their gods*, is always understood to signify appeasing the anger of their gods. Condemned rebels may be said to be reconciled to their sovereign, when he, on one consideration or another, pardons them; though, perhaps, they still remain rebels in their hearts against him: And when our Lord ordered the OFFENDING to go and be reconciled to his OFFENDED brother, (Matth. v. 23, 24.) the plain meaning is, that he should go, and try to appease his anger, obtain his forgiveness, and regain his favour and friendship, by humbling himself to him, asking his pardon, or satisfying him for any injury that he might have done him. In like manner, *God's reconciling us to himself* by the cross of Christ, does not signify, as the *Socinians* contend, our being reconciled, by conversion, to a religious turn in our hearts to God: But it is a reconciliation that results from God's graciously providing and accepting an atonement for us, that he might not inflict the punishment upon us which we deserved, and the law condemned us to; but might be at peace with us, and receive us into favour, on Christ's account: For this reconciliation, by the cross of Christ, is in a way of atonement or satisfaction to divine justice for sin; and,

with respect hereunto, we are said to be reconciled to God by the death of his Son, while we were enemies, which is of much the same import with Christ's dying for the ungodly, and while we were yet sinners: (Rom. v. 6, 8, 10.) And our being reconciled to God, by approving and accepting of his method of reconciliation by Jesus Christ, and, on that encouragement, turning to him, is distinguished from his reconciling us to himself, and not imputing our trespasses to us, on account of Christ's having been made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Cor. v. 18,—21.) This is called Christ's making reconciliation for iniquity, and making reconciliation for the sins of the people, (Dan. ix. 24. and Heb. ii. 17.) and answers to the ceremonial and typical reconciliation which was made by the blood of the sacrifices under the law, to make atonement and reconciliation for Israel: (2 Cor. xxix. 24. and Ezek. xlv. 15, 17.) and which was frequently styled, *making atonement for sin*, and an *atonement for their souls*. Now as all the legal sacrifices of atonement, and the truly expiatory sacrifice of Christ, were offered, not to the offenders, but to God, to reconcile him to them; what can reconciliation by the death, blood, or cross of Christ, mean, but that the law and justice of God were thereby satisfied, and all obstructions, on his part, to peace and friendship toward sinners are removed, that he might not pursue his righteous demands upon them, according to the holy resentments of his nature and will, and the threatnings of his law, for their sins; but might mercifully forgive them, and take them into a state of favour with himself, upon their receiving the atonement, or (καταλλαγήν) reconciliation, (Rom. v. 11.) by faith, after the offence that sin had given him, and the breach it had made upon the original friendship between him and them? (Vid. *Grot. de Satisf. cap. vii.* and *Dr. Owen's answer to Biddle's Catechism, &c. chap. xxix.*)

Christ, that the righteous demands of his broken law and offended justice might not be executed upon them; but that he might honourably act toward them in a way of kindness and friendship, according to the riches of his love and grace; whether they be believers among *Jews* or *Gentiles* on earth, or glorified saints, that in the virtue of his blood already are, or ever shall be in heaven.

21 And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable, and un-reprovable in his sight:

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.

21, 22 And in consequence of this, ye, who heretofore, in the days of your unregeneracy, were estranged from the life of God, and, through the perverse reasonings of your own corrupt minds, were full of enmity to him, and discovered yourselves to be, and actually became more and more so, by an habitual course of wicked practices, in contradiction to him, and to his holy law; (*Rom. viii. 7.*) he has now, upon your believing in Christ, brought into a state of reconciliation, peace, and friendship with himself, by the human body of Christ, which consisted of flesh and blood, like the bodies of other men, even through the merit and efficacy of his atoning death, who his own self bore your sins in his own body on the tree, (*1 Pet. ii. 24.*) that he might present you to himself, or make you stand before him, as pure and holy members of his church, without spot or blemish, (*Eph. v. 27.*) and that nothing may be found to bring you under condemnation, or reproof in his sight, as the great Judge of all, or in the sight of God, at the last day.

23 This, I am well satisfied, will be the happy event, as to you*, since ye have given evident proof of your being sincere believers; by your steadfastly persevering in the faith of Christ, as persons that are built on him, as your foundation, and are firmly established in your dependence alone on him; and so maintain your ground against all the artful and violent attempts of your enemies to shake and carry you off from Christ, the object of your hope, and from your hope in him, as set before you in the gospel, which ye have heard, attended to, and received, and which, according to the true intent of our Lord's commission,

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* If ye continue might be, more agreeable to the apostle's design, rendered since ye continue; for the particle (*ὅτι*) often signifies since, as in *2 Cor. v. iii.* (see the note there) and ye continue (*ἵνα*) is not in the future, but present tense, intimating what they did at present, or hitherto; and, (as Mr. Pierce observes in his note here) this sense is necessary, because of the now

(*νῦν*) in the next verse, and because the apostle speaks of his *joying and beholding their steadfastness in the faith of Christ* (*Chap. ii. 5.*) And so no argument can be drawn from hence against the perseverance of the saints; or for making their continuing in the faith the cause of their being presented un-reprovable at the great day.

commission, (*Mark xvi. 15.*) has been preached promiscuously to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, under what quarter of the heavens soever they dwell; (see the note on *ver. 28.*) and I, *Paul*, am highly favoured with his special commission to communicate this gospel particularly to the *Gentiles*. (*Acts xxvi. 16, 17, 18.*)

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake, which is the church:

24 And seeing ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, (*ver. 23.*) I now, instead of repining at the severe persecutions and present imprisonments, that have befallen me for your sakes, on account of my preaching the gospel to *Gentile* sinners, (*Eph. iii. 1.*) do, on the contrary, even rejoice in them, and count them my honour, (*Acts v. 41.*) as they also are your glory; (*Eph. iii. 13.*) and instead of persecuting others, as formerly *, I, in my turn, now cheerfully undergo all manner of tribulations, which still remain for filling up the measure of my sufferings for Christ's glory, as he filled up the measure of his sufferings for my redemption; and which I am further to endure in my natural body, after his example, and in his cause, who counts them his own, and has appointed them to me for the benefit of his mystical body, by which I mean his church, that they may be confirmed in the faith of the gospel, and encouraged to bear, with undaunted bravery, whatever sufferings they may be called to undergo for it, by seeing how I am enabled to behave with holy fortitude, patience, and joy, under mine.

25 Whereof I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

25 Of which church (*we*) I am, by his immediate authority, constituted a minister in my apostolic office, according to the infinitely gracious and holy (*οικουμενικῆς*) order of God's settling in his family, for dispensing the gospel, which is committed to me, as a sacred trust, with a special regard to you as *Gentiles*; (*Eph. iii. 1, 2.* and *1 Tim. i. 11, 12.*) for your

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* *Fill up* (*ἀναπληρω*) says *Le Clerk*. and *Mr Pierce* after him, in a beautiful criticism on the place, signifies *fill up by turns*, to intimate, that the apostle now suffered in his turn, as he had formerly made others suffer for Christ in theirs: And I am apt to think, that, in calling these the *afflictions of Christ*, he might recollect Christ's saying to him, in the career of his persecutions, *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* (*Acts ix. 4.*) Or, according to the above given sense of the word translated *fill up*, he might mean that, as Christ had suffered for his redemption, he now in his turn suffered for Christ's glory, and in conformity to

him as *sufferings for Christ* are manifestly to be understood in *2 Cor. i. 5.* and *1 Pet. iv. 13.* But I do not find, on the strictest search, that Christ's own sufferings are any where called as here, his *afflictions* (*θλίψεις τοῦ Χριστοῦ*) while this word is commonly used, through the New Testament, to express the sufferings of the apostles and other Christians for Christ's sake; nor can any of their sufferings be supposed to be added to his, or to concur with his, for the satisfaction of divine justice, without overthrowing the perfection of his atoning sacrifice, who, *by one offering, perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* (*Heb. x. 14.*)

26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints :

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles ; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory :

28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom ; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus :

your conversion, edification, and salvation, to fulfil his prophetic word about his calling the *Gentiles* ; (Isa. xi. 10. and xlii. 1. Zech. ii. 11. and Mal. i. 11.)

26 Which is indeed a mystery, both as it contains the unsearchable riches of Christ, (*Eph. iii. 8. **) and as it has been so far concealed, especially in its brightest glories, from ages and generations under the law, that the *Gentiles* knew nothing of it, and the *Jews*, did not fully understand the notices that were given of it under former dispensations ; but which is now as clearly revealed as the nature of things admits of, (*tout exposé aux yeux*) to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, (*Eph. iii. 5.*) and through them, to all true believers, who, by profession, obligation, and regenerating grace, are his saints.

27 To whom God, of his own good pleasure, according to his eternal purpose, and ancient predictions, would now, under the New Testament-dispensation, make a plain discovery of the exceeding riches of the glory of this incomprehensibly excellent gospel, even among the *Gentiles*, which is all summed up in Christ, who, as preached among you, and as dwelling in your hearts by his Spirit and by faith, is become the author and ground of all your hopes of eternal life, as well as is the purchaser of all its glory.

28 This is the blessed Saviour, whom we, as messengers of the best tidings that ever were brought to the sons of men, declare, and make the grand subject of our ministry, in his glorious person and offices, in the whole compass of his mediation, and in the believing, affectionate, and obediential regards, that are due to him, and to God the Father through him ; admonishing all sorts of persons to reflect upon their sinful and obnoxious state by nature, and to take heed of rejecting him † ; and instructing them, without distinction

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* *Mystery* here, as in several other places, relates to the calling of the *Gentiles*, which was before, at least comparatively speaking, a mystery, but is now most clearly revealed : And yet as there were many plain and express prophecies of this under the Old Testament, a vast collection of which is made, and compared with correspondent New Testament texts, by the learned Huet, in his *Demonstratio Evangelica*, Vid. Prop. 9. cap. 158. p. 589.—597. It cannot be said not to have been revealed before, though, through mistaken prejudices, it was not generally understood, in its true sense and meaning : And therefore its

being called a *mystery* seems, not only to carry the idea of its having lain under great obscurity before ; (which I apprehend is to be considered with reference to the doctrines of the gospel itself, as well as to its being preached to the *Gentiles*) but also of the unfathomable depths of wisdom and grace that are contained in the gospel, as now revealed in the plainest manner that it ever will be in this world, or that our faculties in this imperfect state are capable of taking in. (See the note on 1 Cor. ii. 7.)

† *Every man*, as mentioned three times over, in this verse, and every creature which is under heaven, ver. 23.

CANNOT

distinction of nations, wherefoever we come, according to the wisdom that God hath given us; and leading them into the knowledge of the manifold wisdom of God, as displayed in the gospel-revelation, to make them wise to salvation; that we may be the means and instruments of presenting them all to God, as true and uncorrupted believers, that are espoused to Christ, (2 Cor. xi. 2.) and well acquainted with the whole scheme of the gospel, and that have, not only a perfection of parts, which belong to the new creature, but an eminent growth of them; and are already perfect in their Head Christ, (see the note on 1 Cor. ii. 6.) and shall be perfected in all knowledge and grace, holiness and happiness, through him, in the heavenly state.

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

29 To the accomplishment of this, I also labour with pains and diligence in prayer and preaching, laying myself out to the utmost by all means, amidst all difficulties, and in the face of all opposition, like the vehement contenders in the *Grecian* games, (*αγωνιστες*) according to the energy of his spirit and grace, which works with mighty power in me, to enable me for it, and with me, to crown my labours with glorious success. (See the note on 1 Cor. xv. 10.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a divine authority does the apostolic character give to *Paul's* epistles! And with what affection should we, after his example, with all aboundings of grace and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, to all the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus! And how should we bless God on their behalf, and recommend them in our prayers to him, on account of what we see or hear of their faith and love, and of their well grounded hope of that eternal life which is reserved in heaven for them, according to the truth of the gospel! What a mercy is it, that this gospel is now preached, by divine commission, to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, in all its unsearchably glorious riches, which was a mystery concealed in great measure from former ages; but is now, as far as the nature of things admits, clearly manifested to the saints! But how much greater is the mercy still, to know this gospel of the grace of God in truth; to experience its efficacy, in delivering us from the power of Satan, and translating us into the kingdom of God's best beloved Son; and to have Christ dwelling in our hearts, as our hope of glory! This encourages further prayers for all increase in light, and grace, and strengthenings, by the glorious operations of divine power, unto all patience, long-suffering, and joy, under all the trials of this life; and unto all becoming, fruitful, and holy walking with God, who in this way will make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. How great and glorious is the person of Christ! He is the essential and representative image of God the Father, who in his own nature is invisible; he had an eternal existence before all worlds, and is the Creator and Upholder, the first cause and last end of all things, from the highest to the lowest of them, in heaven and earth; he also, as Mediator, is the head of his mystical body,

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cannot be supposed to mean all the individuals of mankind; but evidently signifies (according to the drift of the apostle's argument, and the frequent use of these universal terms in the New Testament) *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to whom he preached Christ and the gospel, that he might present them perfect in him, without distinction of nations, or preference of one sort of them to another.

dy the church; has all office and dispensatory fulness constantly residing in him; and is the first and chief that rose from the dead to immortal life, and every way super-eminent to all saints and angels. And how important are the benefits that his church receive from him! They that were sometimes enemies, through the iniquity of their hearts and lives, are now reconciled to God by his atoning death, and have remission of sins through his redeeming blood; and they are kept steadfast in the faith and hope of the gospel, till at length they shall be presented faultless, and without rebuke, in the sight of God. And what an honour is it to be made wife and faithful preachers of Christ, and instruments of presenting multitudes perfect in him! Who would not willingly lay themselves out to the utmost, according to the powerful workings of his grace in, and with them, to subserve this blessed design; and rather rejoice than repine at any sufferings, to what degree soever they may be called to undergo them in the cause of Christ, for his sake, and for the conversion, edification, and eternal salvation of many souls!

C H A P. II.

The apostle expresses his love to, and joy in believers, whom he had never seen, and encourages their continuing to walk in Christ, 1,—7. Cautions them against the errors of heathen philosophy, against the vanity of Jewish traditions, and against an observance of Mosaic rites, which had been completely fulfilled in Christ, beyond what they could hope to find elsewhere, 8,—17. Against worshipping of angels, as that were, in effect, renouncing their Head, Christ, 18, 19. And against legal ordinances and human institutions, that are of no advantage for spiritual purposes, 20,—23.

TEXT.

FOR I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

PARAPHRASE.

IT is with particular reference to you, that I speak of my earnest endeavour to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (*Chap. i. 28, 29.*) For I would fain make you sensible of my great solicitude, concern, and fervent prayers for you, (*chap. i. 9.*) the believers at *Colosse*, and for those of your neighbouring city of *Laodicea*; and even for all that have received the faith of Christ, wherever they reside, though they, like you, have never had the opportunity of seeing me in the body, nor consequently of attending on my ministry, and being wrought upon by it.

2 I wrestle with God in prayer for all such, that their hearts may be abundantly filled with divine consolation, as believers that are closely and firmly cemented together in the bonds of the most cordial affection to Christ and one another; and are thoroughly united in endeavours for attaining a distinct, clear, and complete acquaintance with the excellent scheme of the gospel, in all its riches of spiritual and eternal blessings, unto the entire satisfaction of their own souls; and unto the most honourable, steady, and public profession of these deep things of God, which, though now revealed for the salvation of the *Gentiles*,

as well as *Jews*, continue to be *unsearchable riches*, (Eph. iii. 8.) that were from all eternity designed, and prepared in the gracious counsels of God the Father's will, (Eph. i. 11.) and are purchased, revealed, and dispensed by our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great Mediator between God and them.

3. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

3. In whom *, as the Head of the church, are contained, for their use and benefit, beyond their comprehension, and with a concealment from carnal minds, all the rich and inexhaustible treasures of perfect wisdom and knowledge, for managing all the affairs of his kingdom of providence and grace, and seasonably supplying all our wants; and for revealing the whole will of God about our salvation; as also for enlightening our minds, and directing us in our way and walk through all the darkness and dangers of this life, and conducting us safe to heavenly glory.

4. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

4. And I thus speak of all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that are laid up in Christ, from the deep concern of my heart for you, that ye may be established in him; lest, *as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty*; (2 Cor. xi. 3.) so, through the plausible insinuations of judaizing teachers, who by false reasonings, *flattering words*, and *fair speeches*, lie in wait to deceive, (1 Cor. xvi. 18. and Eph. iv. 14.) any one should delude you into insnaring notions, that are contrary to, or derogatory from Christ and his glory, and would turn you off from him, and from the pure doctrine of salvation alone through him: My knowledge of your affairs, and affection to you, engage this solicitous care of my soul about you.

5. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

5. For though I be corporally distant from you, and never saw you; yet my heart is with you, in delightful reflections on what I have heard of your faith, love, and hope; (*chap. i. 4, 5.*) and I clearly perceive, by suggestions of the Spirit, how things are with you, (see the note on 1 Cor. v. 3.) as to your rich attainments, on one hand, and trials of various kinds, on the other; and I am filled with sacred joy from what I know of your circumstances, as if I were personally present with you, particularly with respect to the good discipline that is kept up among you,

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* In whom (*iv. a*) may be rendered *in which*, and refer to the *mystery*, as well as to *Christ*; and so signifies that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, relating to salvation, are wrapped up, and contained in *this mystery*: But I rather take it to be meant of *Christ*, who is the nearest antecedent, and is spoken of *ver. 9, 10.* as having *all the ful-*

ness of the Godhead dwelling in him, in whom the church is complete. (See also Dr. *Whitby's* note here.) And *hid in him* intimates, (says Bishop *Davenant* on the place) that these treasures of wisdom and knowledge are so hid, as not to be discerned by carnal men, but only by those to whom God hath given *spiritual eyes* to see them.

you, as a church of Christ, and the orderly behaviour of its several members; and with respect to the firm, solid, and steady adherence of your faith to the person, mediation, and doctrines of Christ, notwithstanding all the artifices that are used to corrupt your minds, and draw you off from him.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him:

6 As therefore ye have received Christ by faith in his person and offices, as your prophet to teach you, as your priest to make atonement and intercede for you, and as your king to rule and govern you, even as your complete Lord and Saviour; so I entreat and exhort you still to cleave with purpose of heart to him, and to walk in a daily exercise of faith in him, and in a constant observation of all his ordinances and commandments; yea, in all holy conversation and godliness, as becomes your profession of him, and relation to him, by virtue of your union with him, and by derivation of grace from him;

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

7 As sincere believers, who, like a tree planted in a good soil, are rooted in Christ, fastening on him, to keep you fixed and immoveable by any wind of doctrine, and drawing nourishment from him for your spiritual growth in him; (*Eph. iv. 14, 15.*) and who, like a house erected on a solid foundation, are built upon Christ, and closely united to him, as the only foundation of your faith and hope, security and salvation, (*1 Cor. iii. 11.*) that ye may grow unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye are built together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit; (*Eph. ii. 21, 22.*) and that ye may be confirmed both in the doctrine and grace of faith in him, according to what ye have heard, and received by the ministry of Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant; (*chap. i. 7.*) and may abound exceedingly in daily increases of light and faith, and every other grace, with enlarged thankfulness and praise to the author and finisher of all that concerns you.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

8 Take heed lest any seducer make a prey of you, and draw you off from Christ and his pure gospel; and rob you of its privileges and blessings, through the subtilties and corruptions of the false philosophy of the heathens, which Jewish doctors have adopted into their religion; and through their fallacious pretences, which are all empty, delusive, and vain, as they puff up the mind with a conceit of things, that have nothing in them; and mislead it to follow the uncertain traditions, that were the inventions of men in former ages, and have been handed down from one generation to another to this very day; and also to observe such ceremonial rites of the Mosaic law, as were the principles, or first elements. (*στοιχια*) of the

the church in its infant-state, and were in themselves of a carnal nature, as suited to impress little children by worldly appearances: (see the paraphrase on *Gal. iv. 3.*) And none of those things are according to the mind and will of Christ, as revealed in the gospel; nor do any of them, as now urged and observed, lead the soul to him alone for salvation, who has an all-sufficiency for it in himself.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily.

9 For the divine nature *, with all the perfections of deity in their utmost fulness, reside, and for ever abide, substantially in his incarnate person, as in the temple of his body, inhabited by the in-dwelling God-head, in a personal, and infinitely more glorious manner, than it ever dwelt in the *Jewish* tabernacle, or temple of old.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

10 And ye, who have received him by faith, (*ver. 6.*) and so are united to him as members of his mystical body, have all salvation in him as your head; ye have all defects made up, and all securities and blessings completed, though not already in your own persons, yet in him, who is made unto you of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; (1 Cor. i. 30.) and who, suitable to the dignity of his divine person, as *all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him*, (*ver. 9.*) is exalted in his office-capacity to be sovereign Lord and Ruler of all ranks and degrees of mankind; yea, of all, even the highest orders of apostate angels, who are under his controul, as vanquished enemies; (*ver. 15.*) and of all the holy angels, that excel in strength, and

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* *The Godhead, the fulness of the Godhead, and all the fulness of the Godhead*, are as strong expressions as can well be imagined, to denote that the divine nature, with not some only, but all its essential perfections, the very same as are in the Father himself, dwell substantially in Christ's human body, as the word (*σωματικως*) may signify, either bodily, to intimate the personal union of the divine nature with the human body, as well as soul of our Lord, when he, the eternal Word, *was made flesh, and dwelt among us*; (John i. 1, 14. see the note there) or really and substantially, in opposition to figuratively and emblematically, in types and shadows, in which sense the apostle says *the body is of Christ*, *ver. 17.* And this is infinitely more than any thing that is said of God's dwelling in his people, (2 Cor. vi. 16.) and of their being filled with all the fulness of God. (*Eph. iii. 19.*) His dwelling in them

evidently signifies only his gracious presence with them, in a way of special favour and relation, manifestation, and operation; and their being filled with all the fulness of God, (*τὸ πλῆρες τοῦ Θεοῦ*) most naturally means, filled with all the gifts and graces that God is the author and giver of: But all the fulness of the Godhead (*πᾶν τὸ θεῖον τὸ θεῶδες*) is a quite different phrase of inconceivably superior signification: For Godhead is the one only divine nature itself, by which God is what he is; and as all acts of divine goodness, wisdom, and power, and the like, are constantly ascribed to God, and never, as far as I can recollect, to the Godhead, there seems to be a great impropriety of language in calling their effects the fulness of the Godhead: But the fulness, or perfection of Deity, is a natural idea of all that is comprehended in God-head; and all this is said to dwell in Christ.

and are entirely under his dominion, who sends them forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. (*Heb. i. 14.*)

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ :

11 In him also ye are so complete, as to have no need of the ordinance of circumcision, which the Jewish zealots would impose upon you ; for ye have a better circumcision of the heart, according to God's promise to his people, and their seed, (*Dent. xxx. 6.*) even a spiritual circumcision, (*Phil. iii. 3.*) which is not effected, like that in the flesh, by the work of human hands, but by the renewing operation of the Spirit ; and consists, not in cutting off the foreskin of the flesh, but in what was signified by it, even a separation of the whole body of sin, which, like the natural body, is made up of many members or parts, that spring from the corruption of nature, and are influenced, and exert themselves, by means of the fleshly body, that ye may be delivered from its guilt, power, and defilement, and at length from the very in-being of it, by virtue of that spiritual circumcision, which Christ is the author of*.

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

12 And, instead of circumcision in the flesh, ye have, by his institution, the ordinance of baptism, which is of like signification, and answers the same ends, as it is a sign of, and obligation to all the holiness, that is, or ought to be found in you, as God's covenant people, by your being conformable to Christ's death, in utterly dying to sin, and giving full evidence of it with continuance, as he died that it might be crucified, and was manifested to be entirely dead, by his being buried, and continuing some time in the grave†. Your privileges and obligations are likewise

NOTES.

* *The circumcision of Christ* cannot mean his own circumcision in the flesh, the eighth day ; for *that*, as much as any other, was made by the hands of men ; but *this* is said, in opposition to that sort of circumcision, to be made without hands, and refers to that spiritual circumcision, of which Christ is the author, and of which, as circumcision formerly was, the baptism of Christ's institution now is the sign : it signifying not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God ; (*1 Pet. iii. 21.*) and so, the signification being the same, baptism comes in the room of circumcision, according to what is intimated in the next verse, as the Lord's supper does of the passover. And this effectually answered the objection of Jewish zealots, as if, whatever internal privi-

leges were pretended to, there were a defect as to external ordinances, for want of circumcision to signify and seal them : For the apostle herein shews, that Christ has not only provided that his people should be partakers of the thing signified by it, but has also substituted another external ordinance, of like use, signification, and design, to be continued under the gospel-state, more suitable to its simplicity and spiritual nature. But if the *infants* of believing parents were not to be baptized under the gospel-dispensation, a strong objection would still have remained against their being complete in Christ, as to external privileges ; since the *children* of the *Israelites*, under the *Mosaic* dispensation, were to be circumcised, as well as themselves.

† *Buried with him*, seems to relate rather

likewise signified in this ordinance, as to your being quickened and raised to a life of holiness, in conformity to the risen Saviour, through that faith which is wrought with almighty energy in your hearts, by the same exceeding greatness of God's power, (*Eph. i. 19, 20.*) which he exerted in raising Christ from the dead; and will put forth, by virtue of his resurrection, in raising you up to eternal life. (*Rom. viii. 11. and 1 Pet. i. 3.*)

13 And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

13 And ye, who in your unregenerate state were dead in law, under a just sentence of condemnation, on account of your trespasses; and were dead toward God, and every thing that is spiritually good, in the disposition of your hearts, under the power of corrupt nature, which was signified, during the *Mosaic* dispensation, by your being uncircumcised in the flesh, he has now raised to a new life of grace and holiness, in order to a heavenly life of glory and blessedness, together with Christ, as your Head, by quickening virtue derived from him, and in conformity to his resurrection from the dead; God having, on his account, freely forgiven you all and every one of your iniquities, whether they be original or actual, greater or lesser sins, that none of them might be imputed to you, or bind the curse of the law upon you, or be brought into judgment against you, though ye never have been literally circumcised; and therefore that ordinance cannot be necessary to your pardon and acceptance with God to eternal life.

14 Blotting out the hand-writing of

14 Yea, as a debt is evidently remitted, or discharged, by crossing and obliterating the book, or bond *, or

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rather to *Christ's burial*, than to *our baptism*. And *buried with him in baptism*, stands in opposition to being *dead in sins*, ver. 13.; and is of the same import with being *crucified with him*, and *dead with him*, as appears by comparing *Rom. vi. 4, 6, 8.* where these terms are used as signifying the same thing. (See also the note on *Rom. vi. 4.*)

* Here is a manifest allusion to various ways of cancelling a debt, and vating a bond, in a beautiful gradation from blotting it out, to taking it quite away, and utterly destroying it, that there might be no room for fear of its ever appearing, or being any more in force against us: And the last of these, which is expressed by *nailing* it to the cross of Christ, may allude both to his crucifixion, which disarmed the law of its condemning power, and death of its sting; and (as *Grotius* observes) to an

ancient custom of striking an antiquated writing through with a nail, to deface it, and render it for ever invalid. The *hand-writing of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, &c.* and was thus effectually disannulled, I take to include the whole law of *Moses*, as a covenant, though with a primary respect to the ceremonial law: But the *moral*, as well as ceremonial law, might be called the *hand-writing of ordinances, that was against us*, as it was written by the appointment of God, and practically subscribed to by *Israel*; (*Deut. v. 27.*) and both together contained an acknowledgment of their guilt, depravity, and obnoxiousness to wrath, and of their need of a better sacrifice and purification, than the ceremonial law could afford, which included an obligation to observe the moral law, that was written by the finger of

of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

or any writing that stood against the debtor; so, with regard to all of us who believe, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, he has blotted out our transgressions, as it were by the red lines of Christ's blood, and thereby disannulled the law-obligation to punishment for them, which testified against us all as transgressors, as well as separated the *Gentiles* from the church and privileges of the *Jews*, and was the cause of enmity between them: He has also removed it out of the way, that it may never be found, and produced, or brought into dispute against us: And that it might be utterly nullified, as a bond that stood out against us, he has, as it were, rent and torn it to pieces, by nailing it to the cross, on which our Lord was fastened by the nails that pierced him through his hands and feet, when he died our sacrifice, and redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. (Gal. iii. 13.)

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made

15 And having vanquished, and disarmed all the powers of darkness, the devil their chief, and all the ranks and orders of apostate spirits with him *, He,

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of God; and, upon failure of obedience, subjected them to its curse, and so was a *ministration of death and condemnation*; (2 Cor. iii. 7. 9.) and in that view, the *Jews* were most immediately concerned in it: And yet the doctrine contained in it affected the *Gentiles* (whose consciences convicted them of sin) as well as the *Jews*. It therefore seems to have been with special design, that the apostle alters the *person*, in this verse, from *you* to *us*, to intimate that the benefit, brought in by Christ, related in common to believers of both sorts, and that it is not to be confined to *Gentiles*, as some understand it, who consider the ceremonial law only, as said to be contrary to them, by excluding them from the privileges and blessings of the *Jews*. But had this been the apostle's precise and restrictive intention, it is very strange that, while he was speaking of *Gentiles*, in the *second person* all along just before, and returned to speak of them in the same manner at ver. 6. and so on to the end of the epistle, he should vary the person here, and that without any apparent reason for it, when it would have been most evidently proper and accurate to have continued it, without any alteration.—For this reason, therefore, among others relating to what equally concerned them both, I cannot readily go into the interpretation, that makes this passage re-

late *merely* to the contrariety of the ceremonial law to the *Gentiles*, though that be included in it, as it was a middle wall of partition between them and the *Jews*. (Vid. Zanch. in loc. and Wits. de Defect. V. T. ad. calc. Oecon. Foed. p. 818, 819.)

* Mr. Pierce, in a large note on this text, has endeavoured to establish a new notion, as though by the *principalities and powers*, here spoken of, were meant, not the *evil* but *good angels*. There is great ingenuity in the conjecture, and much labour employed in criticism to maintain it. But, upon the most careful examination, it does not appear to me to be sufficiently supported: For, admitting that *he spoiled principalities and powers* is not predicated of Christ, but of God the Father, it is most naturally to be understood of what the Father did by Christ, in his triumphant death; and yet, as Christ's cross, mentioned in the close of the foregoing verse, is the immediate antecedent to this, it seems plain and easy enough to refer the *spoiling of principalities and powers* to him, as what he himself has done, by his sufferings and death, in obtaining the conquest over them. And as to its connection with the context, which this learned writer thinks cannot be made out, but upon his interpretation, what can be more agreeable to the apostle's design to prove, that believers are *complete* in Christ,

made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

as the seed of the woman, that was to bruise the serpent's head, (*Gen. iii. 15.*) and God the Father, by him, exposed them to open contempt and shame, in the view of all the holy angels, as spoils of war, triumphing like a glorious conqueror over them, in virtue of his cross, (*ver. 14.*) as his sufferings upon it were a complete satisfaction to divine justice for sin, and as he *through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil*, (*Heb. ii. 14.*) and did this by his own strength, without the aid or assistance of any creature whatsoever. (*Isa. lxiii. 3.*)

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink,

16 Since therefore the believing *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, are complete in Christ, (*ver. 10.*) and the hand-writing of ordinances, that was contrary to both,

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Christ, (*ver. 10.*) than to shew that they are not only partakers of the spiritual circumcision, which is signified by the New Testament-ordinance of baptism, and are quickened with Christ, and forgiven all trespasses, and acquitted from law-obligations that stood in force against them; but that all the powers of darkness are also entirely vanquished for them by his cross? And what the apostle had said, *ver. 10.* about Christ's being the head of all principality and power, is a sufficient reason against worshipping of angels, *ver. 18, 19.* This gentleman, in further support of his own interpretation, supposes that, before our Saviour's time, the good angels had provinces and dominions allotted them, one presiding over one country, and another over another country, which he apprehends is intimated by the mention that is made of the princes of *Persia* and *Greece*, and *Michael* the prince, *Dan. x. 13, 20, 21.*; but that, at our Lord's resurrection, this power was taken from them, and they, being all divested of their dominion, were placed in subjection to him. But though it is undoubtedly true, that Christ is in our nature raised far above all principalities and powers, and that angels, authorities, and powers are made subject to him; (*Eph. i. 20, 21.* and *1 Pet. ii. 21.*) yet I know of no intimation in Scripture, that he has reduced their powers, or taken away any thing from them, which they ever had before; nor does it seem very agreeable to the grace that shines forth in his headship to angels, as well as men, to suppose that he came to deprive, or divest them of any dignity, or dominion, that they before were possessed of: Nor is what is said in *Dan. x. 13, 20, 21.* about the princes of *Persia* and *Greece*,

any real proof of distinct dominions being assigned to different angels over different countries; for though *Michael*, which some suppose to be Christ himself, and others a chief minister of the heavenly host under him, appeared for *Israel* against their enemies; yet the princes of *Persia* and *Greece* may most naturally be understood of earthly princes, that were set over these kingdoms, according to the common interpretation: And if angels were supposed to be intended by these princes, one can hardly think they were good angels, since one of them contended against the other, and none but *Michael* the prince held with the angel that spake to *Daniel*. As to some further criticisms of this author's, to maintain his point, he supposes that there is no necessity of taking the words, *he made a shew of them openly*, in an ill sense; and we may with as good reason suppose, that there is no necessity of taking *triumphing over them*, to signify (as he renders it) *causing them to triumph*; for though it be so translated in *2 Cor. ii. 14.* yet the word itself, which is used only in these two places of the New Testament, most properly and frequently signifies to triumph; and so is to be construed one way, or the other, according as the subject-matter leads to it, and not, without necessity, in the less usual sense. And in that parallel text, *Eph. iv. 8.* where the apostle speaks of Christ's leading captivity captive, the allusion is to the triumph of conquerors over their enemies; and in *Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18.* the place there referred to, the holy angels are represented as his attendants, and not as the vanquished captives, in his triumphant ascension. See also the notes on *Ephes. iv. 8.*

drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new-moon, or of the sabbath-days:

is now cancelled, (See the note on *ver. 14.*) Let no *Jewish* zealot pretend; (*non tunc opus negare*) or, if any of them should be so rash and presumptuous, let none of you be troubled at their vain pretences, to censure and condemn you, as though ye were excluded from salvation, because ye do not observe their legal rites: As, to instance in some particulars, which, together with circumcision, they lay great stress upon, None ought to judge and condemn you, for not abstaining from *Jewish* meats, or drinks, as forbidden in their law; or on account of your neglecting to keep their religious annual festivals, such as the passover, pentecost, and the feast of tabernacles; or their monthly feasts at the first appearance of the new moon; * or even their seventh day weekly sabbaths,

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* *Sabbaths* seem to be here meant of the *seventh day sabbath*, because distinguished from the anniversary and monthly festivals of the *Jews*; and because this is the common import of the word *sabbath* in the New Testament, and is always so in the Old, when mentioned in conjunction with, or in contradistinction to *new-moons* and *feasts*. (See Dr. *Whitby's* note on the place.) But then the caution against a religious regard to it is to be considered only with reference to the obligations that lay on the *Jews*, to observe that particular day, during the *Mosaic* dispensation, and its attending ritual observances, which did not belong to the morality of the sabbath, nor are obligatory upon Christians any more than the *seventh day* itself, under the gospel-state: But the devoting of a *seventh part of time* in a holy manner to the Lord, belongs unchangeably to the moral nature and obligation of the *fourth commandment*, which is transferred in the New Testament, from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week. (See the notes on *John* xx. 26. and *Acts* xx. 7.) To this it may not be amiss to add the judicious note of Mr. *Kennicott* in his dissertation on the obligations of *Cain* and *Abel*, p. 184. 185. where he says, "The sabbath, or weekly day of holiness, might well be called a *sign* to the *Jews*; for the *Jewish* sabbath was a *sign*, as being founded on a double reason, the second of which (the *Egyptian* deliverance) evidently distinguished that people from all others, and was therefore as a sign constantly to remind them of the particular care of heaven, and what uncommon returns of goodpels they were to make for so signal a deliverance. But

there is great reason to believe, that the sabbath of the *Israelites* was altered with their year, at their coming forth from *Egypt*; and a short attention to this point may not be here improper: The case then seems to be this: At the finishing of the creation, God sanctified the seventh day; this seventh day, being the first day of *Adam's* life, was consecrated by way of first-fruits to God; and therefore *Adam* may reasonably be supposed to have began his computation of the days of the week with the *first whole day* of his own existence; thus the sabbath became the first day of the week: But when mankind fell from the worship of the true God, they first substituted the worship of the Sun in his place, and preserving the same weekly day of worship, but devoting it to the Sun, the sabbath was called *Sunday*; for that *Sunday* was the first day of the week, and is so still in the east, is proved by Mr. *Selden*, (Jus. Nat. and Gent. lib. 3. c. 22.) Thus the sabbath of the patriarchs continued to be the *Sunday* of the idolaters, till the coming up of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*; and then, as God altered the beginning of their year, so he also changed the day of their worship from *Sunday* to *Saturday*; the first reason of which might be, that as *Sunday* was the day of worship among the idolaters, the *Israelites* would be more likely to join with them if they rested on the same day, than if they were to work on that day, and serve their God upon another. But a second reason certainly was in order to perpetuate the memory of their deliverance on that day from *Egyptian* slavery; for *Moses*, when he applies the fourth commandment

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

18 Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind;

baths, which God instituted to be peculiarly observed by them under the *Mosaic* dispensation.

17 Which sort of ordinances, so far forth as they were merely ceremonial and *Jewish*, were only types, figures, or adumbrations of the good things of the gospel; (*Heb. x. 1.*) but in opposition to these shadows, the reality, truth, or substance of the things themselves, are brought in by Christ, and to be sought and found only in him. *The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* (*John i. 17.*)

18 And since he, in whom ye are complete, is the head of all principality and power, (*ver. 10.* and see the note on *ver. 15.*) Let no one (*μὴ τις υἱὸς καὶ ἀσθενῆς*) whether *Jewish* zealot or *Gentile* philosopher, take upon him * unjustly to deprive you of that glorious prize of the eternal inheritance, which is adjudged in the gospel to every true believer; or lead you out of the way to it, by drawing you into a willing compliance with the false and affected humility of men's own devising, and not of God's commanding; and, under that disguise, into paying religious worship to angels, or inferior demons, as mediators and intercessors, on pretence of its being too bold and presumptuous to approach the Divine Majesty, without their interposition between him and you. The pretender to these notions arrogantly attempts to pry into such things as God has never revealed, and as are quite above his reach, and he has no knowledge of; and would determine about them under the power of his own vain and carnal mind, that is blown up and swelled with self-conceit, and the pride of human reasonings about God and angels, and the way of a sinner's access

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mandment to the particular cases of his own people, *Deut. v. 15.* does not enforce it, as in *Exod. xx. 11.* by the consideration of God's resting on that day, which was the sabbath of the patriarchs; but binds it upon them by saying, *Remember that thou wast a servant in Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to keep this SABBATH-DAY.* Allowing then the preceding observations, we immediately see how the sabbath naturally reverted to *Sunday*, after the abolition of *Judaism*, without any express command for the alteration." To which he adds a quotation from Bp. Cumberland, (*Orig. Gent. Antiq. p. 400.*) which speaks of the

Gentiles, as called, after Christ's time, into the same universal church with the patriarchs; and another from *Justin Martyr*, (*Apolog. prim. Edit. Thirlby, p. 98.*) which I find in the *Paris* edition of *Justin Martyr's* 2d apology, p. 99. The purport of which is, that all Christians generally assembled for religious worship on the *Sunday*; because it is the first day after that, in which God had finished the creation of the world; and on the same day of the week, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, rose from the dead. (See also Dr. Owen on the Sabbath.)

* Here is a plain allusion to the *Brabeutæ*, or officers, that judged, and sometimes falsely judged the prize to wrestlers, racers, &c. in the *Grecian* games.

access to him, and with a fond desire of being thought wiser than other men.

19 And not holding the head, from which all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

19 And such an one runs into these corrupt notions to the high dishonour of Jesus Christ, rejecting, instead of laying hold by faith on him, or adhering to, and trusting alone in him, as the only and all-sufficient Mediator and Advocate, to recommend us and our prayers to divine acceptance; and joining mere creatures in office with him, who is the head of rule and dominion over both the holy and the fallen angels, (*ver. 10.*) as well as over all the other works of his hand; and is the representative and vital, as well as governing head of the church; from whom all the members of his mystical body, deriving spiritual nourishment, are united to him and to one another, by his Spirit, and by faith and love, and by means of religious ordinances, which answer to the joints, ligaments, and nerves, that unite the members of the natural body one to another, and to their head; and so increase in light and grace, comfort, holiness, and strength, and in every excellent and abounding improvement of a spiritual nature, which God is the author of, and which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, and to his praise and glory.

20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world; why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

20 If therefore, according to the meaning and engagement of your baptism, (*ver. 12.*) ye be spiritually dead with Christ; and if by virtue of his death, who nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to his cross, (*ver. 14.*) ye be as effectually discharged, as though ye were corporally dead, from all obligations to pay any regard to Jewish institutions, which may be called the rudiments, or elements of the world, (*Gal. iv. 3.* see the paraphrase there) Why then, as though ye were persons of a worldly temper, and living under such a carnal dispensation, are ye still burdened with legal ordinances, by those that would dogmatically impose them upon you? (*δογματίζοντες*)

21 (Touch not, taste not, handle not:

21 Such, for instance, as relate to the difference of meats, and consist in strict prohibitions to this effect, * *viz.* Never venture to eat; no, nor taste; nor so much as in the least touch any of those meats that are ceremonially unclean.

22 Which all are to perish with the using) after the com-

22 All which meats are nevertheless appointed of God, for the use of man under the gospel-state; and are consumed and cast into the draught, in using them, and

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* Several critics have observed, that *touch not* (*μὴ ἅψῃ*) sometimes signifies *eat not*; and so the gradation of these Jewish prohibitions is very clear and strong, as tasting is less than eating, and

handling is less than tasting; and the next verse shews that they entirely relate to meats that perish with the using. (See Bishop Davenant and Mr. Pierce on the place.)

commandments & doctrines of men?

and so cannot defile the soul. (*Mat. xi. 15, 17.*) And if, ye being now dead with Christ to the formerly divine ordinances about these things, (*ver. 20.*) they ought not to be enjoined, or observed, on the foot of *human* authority, how much less ought your consciences to be imposed upon in things that neither have, nor ever had any foundation in the word of God; but, like the worshipping of angels, &c. (*ver. 18.*) are merely human inventions, enforced upon you by the arbitrary will and dictates of men?

23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

23 These their commandments and doctrines are indeed added to those of the abolished *Mosaic* law, under the specious appearances of human wisdom, in contriving means of paying redundant honour to God, by superstitious worship and services, as free-will-offerings of our own, beyond all that he had prescribed or required; and in expressions of extraordinary humility; (*ver. 18.*) as also in mortifications of the body by uninstituted acts of self-denial, and not shewing any esteem of those things that might gratify and refresh animal nature: Whereas, in reality, all this pretended shew of wisdom, humility, and mortifications, has nothing worthy in itself, or truly honourable to God; but is only suited to cultivate and please the false taste of men of corrupt minds.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How affectionate are Christ's servants to his people, whether they be personally acquainted with them, or not! And how solicitous for their union, comfort, and increase in the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ! How delighted in reflections on their faith and order! And how concerned that, as they have received Christ in all his offices, they may walk in him, with steadfastness of faith, love, and obedience, and with gratitude and praise, according to what they have learned and received from him! And O how glorious is our Lord in his divine nature, as possessed of all the fulness of the Godhead, and in his human nature and office-capacity, as enriched with all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, for executing the high and important trust committed to him! Believers cannot but be complete in him, whose divine and mediatorial-characters are so great and excellent, who is the Head of dominion over all the holy and fallen angels, and the Head of representation, government, and influence to the church; all the members of which are closely united to him and one another, and derive all supplies of grace and spiritual nourishment from him, in such ways of union and communication, as are answerable to those of the natural body. They are quickened by his Spirit from their former death in sin; are forgiven all trespasses, and made conformable to his death and resurrection, according to the meaning and obligation of their baptism, which comes in the room of circumcision, and is to be applied to the same sort of subjects; and they are delivered from all obligations of the ceremonial and moral law too, as a covenant of works, and from its curse, which, for failure of obedience to its precepts, stood against them. But, blessed be God, the whole frame of legal ordinances, that one way or other testified against them, is now demolished by the cross of Christ, who is the substance of its shadows, as they are fulfilled in him; and has taken away its curse, as bore by him; and who, by means of his own death, has entirely subdued, disarmed, and publicly triumphed over all the devils in hell, as his captives in chains. What therefore have believers to do any more with *Ye abolished meats and drinks, or their solemn feasts and seventh-day sabbath, or their ceremonial rites of any kind?* How much less ought they to fall in with human inventions and injunctions, relating to the worship of God! How careful should

should they be, never to pay religious homage to him by the mediation of saints or angels, to the disparagement and rejection of Christ, as their only Head and Advocate, or in any way that he has not prescribed in his word! They are dead with him to all these things; and whatever pretences there may be of wisdom, humility, and mortification of the body, in them, Let none deceive us by enticing words, nor condemn us for neglecting them; nor lead us out of the way to eternal life, by drawing us into an observance of them. They are all will-worship, of men's own devising, to soothe the pride and carnal temper of those that would be wise above what is written, and pry into things that they know nothing of. They are works of supererogation and superstition, that bring no honour to God, whatsoever is pretended by men. May we therefore keep fast hold by faith on Christ, and stedfastly adhere to him, as our Head, and abide by his institutions, and never submit our consciences to the ordinances, doctrines, and commandments of men!

C H A P. III.

The apostle exhorts the Colossians to be heavenly-minded, as those that are risen with Christ, 1,—4. to mortify all corrupt affections, as those that are renewed after the image of God, 5,—11. to cultivate mutual love, forbearance, and forgiveness, with other evangelical graces, 12,—17. and to practise the relative duties of wives and husbands, children, parents, and servants, 18,—25.

TEXT.

IF ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

PARAPHRASE.

IF, as I trust, according to your profession, ye be indeed risen from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, through the faith of the operation of God, (*chap. ii. 12.*) together with, in conformity to, and by the quickening virtue of a risen Saviour, shew that ye are so, by the elevated temper, and outgoings of your hearts, as aspiring upwards in your meditations and views, inquiries and earnest pursuits, by prayer, and all other ordinances of divine appointment, after realizing, clear, and enlarged experiences and assurances of the durable, substantial, and satisfying things, that relate to a future world of all delights, that lies far above all visible heavens, (*Ephes. iv. 10.*) where Jesus, your ascended Head in human nature is; and because he is there exalted in all his majesty and authority, dignity and glory, blessedness, rest, and safety, as these are metaphorically signified by his sitting at the right hand of God the Father, (see the note on *Acts vii. 55.*) to secure your best and eternal interests, by making continual intercession, and preparing a place for you, that *where he is, there ye may be also, to behold his glory.* (*John xiv. 3. and xvii. 24.*)

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

2 Let all your affections of desire and hope, love and delight, be supremely fixed, like spiritually minded men, (*Rom. viii. 5.*) with relish and savour, (*Psalm*) upon those excellent things, that belong to, and are transacted in that upper state, which far surpass

pass all our thoughts; and not upon the empty, uncertain, perishing, and desiling pleasures and enjoyments of this world; nor upon the ceremonial rudiments of it, which are as much below the worth and dignity of these sublime felicities, as the earth is inferior to heaven: And it is highly fit that ye, as Christians, should seek after, and set your affections on heavenly things.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

3 For ye are, by profession and obligation, and all true believers among you are, by communion with Christ in his death, really dead in your hearts and affections; as to the *Mosaic* law, and crucified, with him, to sin and the world, (*Rom. vi. 2, 6. and Gal. vi. 14.*) so as not to seek your portion, and place your happiness in earthly things: And all the entertainments and enjoyments of your spiritual life are maintained, and carried on, in secret transactions between God and your own souls here, till they shall be perfected in an eternal life of all blessedness and glory hereafter, by virtue of your mystical union with Christ your Head, who himself is essentially united with God the Father, as he is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, (*John xiv. 11. and xvii. 21.*; see the notes there.) The things of this heavenly life are out of sight, they being hid, as much as Christ himself now is, from an eye of sense, and from the conceptions of a carnal mind; and after all that believers themselves experience of them, they *know not what they shall be*; (*1 John iii. 2.*) and they are the most excellent things, that are securely treasured up with Christ, in the secret purposes, and in the immediate presence of God the Father, as a safe and precious reserve for you, *ready to be revealed in the last times.* (*1 Pet. i. 4, 5.*)

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

4 When Christ, who lives in us, (*Gal. ii. 20.*) and is the purchaser, author, sustainer, and finisher, and the scope and end of our spiritual life, shall appear, as the Judge of the whole world, in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and of all the holy angels; (*Luke ix. 26.*) then ye also, who are quickened by his Spirit, shall be glorified with him; and shine forth, in soul and body, with a glory resembling that in which he himself will be manifested as your Head and Saviour. (*Phil. iii. 21.*)

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence,

5 In prospect therefore of this blessed day, and in reflection on the spirituality, purity, and sublime happiness ye shall then enjoy, as those that are risen with Christ, and dead to sin, and the pleasures of this world, labour, *through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body*, (*Rom. viii. 13.*) that ye may daily subdue them more and more, (*exposuits*) till ye have entirely

slain

cupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

slain all the remainders of your carnal inclinations to iniquitous and earthly things; which may be considered as so many members of the old man, the body of sin, that execute its designs about earthly things, and are influenced, and exert themselves, by the members of the natural body, (see the note on *Rom. vi. 13.*) while ye continue in this imperfect state upon earth. To instance in some particulars, that are a shame to the Christian character, exert your holy principles, under divine influence, to gain an absolute conquest over all sorts of unlawful embraces, whether in the single or married life; (see the note on *1 Cor. v. 1.*) all impurity in thought, word, or deed; all propensions to any sin, and particularly that of unchastity; all the first motions to it in heart; and all excessive desire after the enjoyments of this world, which is spiritual idolatry, as it sets the creature in the place of, or at least in a competition with God himself, and draws the heart, and its trust and confidence, off from him to them.

6 For which things sake, the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

6 All these, and every thing of a like sinful nature, are to be abandoned and abhorred, as defiling and provoking evils, on account of, and for the punishment of which, the justice of God breaks forth in executions of his terrible indignation, sometimes in this world, and certainly in the next, on the refractory sons (*amishus*) of infidelity, and disobedience to his commands.

7 In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

7 In which sinful courses ye yourselves formerly went on, with indulgence and choice, in the days of your unbelief and unregeneracy; when, while dead toward God, ye lived in the love and practice of them, committing all iniquity with greediness.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

8 But now ye, as Christians renewed by grace, ought to have no further fellowship with these deeds of darkness; *the time past of your life should suffice to have wrought the will of the Gentiles:* (*1 Pet. iv. 3.*) And together with these fleshly corruptions, ye ought to discard and utterly renounce all the following sins; that most immediately deprave the soul; such as causeless and intemperate anger; and furious passion, which is the height of anger; and a malicious revengeful spirit, which is worst of all: Ye ought also to avoid all manner of language that discovers a bad disposition of heart; such as speaking reproachfully of God and sacred things, and speaking evil of others, (*Eph. iv. 31.*) to blast their name, reputation, and usefulness, or to be any way injurious to them; and ye should abstain from all immodest expressions, which tend to defile your own, or others minds,

minds, that nothing of this kind may ever proceed out of your lips.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

9 Take heed also of ever speaking any thing contrary to truth, with a design of deceiving one another, which would be to imitate, and act under the influence of the father of lies, (*John* viii. 44.) and is inconsistent with your holy character, privileges, and obligations; since, according to your profession, ye, as I trust, have sincerely and absolutely cast off, and renounced the body of sin, with all its pernicious and defiling practices, which may be considered as the *old man*, that is as ancient as your beings, and works with subtilty in you; but which is now in a decaying state, and will soon expire, like a man of decrepid old age, that is daily declining in his strength, and hastening to the grave: (see the paraphrase on *Rom.* vi. 6. and *Eph.* iv. 22.) It is a shameful, self-contradictory thing for you, who, as members of Christ, *have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts*, (*Gal.* v. 24.) to give way to any of these abominations.

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him:

10 And it is much more so, as by a work of heart-changing grace ye have assumed, and as it were clothed yourselves with, the holy qualities, and beautiful ornaments of the new creature; which is a restoration to the divine likeness, and consists of spiritual light and knowledge, in the renewing of your minds, as well as of righteousness and true holiness, in the renewing of your hearts and lives, (*Eph.* iv. 23, 24.) according to the pure and spotless image of God, or of Christ, who at first created man after his own likeness, which was defaced by the fall; but in which he anew creates him, by supernatural grace, as *God's workmanship in Christ Jesus*, (*Eph.* ii. 10.) and in conformity to him. (*Rom.* viii. 29.)

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

11 In which new creation, and the benefits of it, there is no partial respect to persons, on account of any external privileges, or the want of them; not to the *Gentiles*, the most polite of which are the *Greeks*; nor to the *Jews*; no, nor to the most learned among them; not to them that have been circumcised in the flesh, and glory in it; nor to them, whom they disdain for their being uncircumcised; nor to the more rude and barbarous nations among the *Gentiles*; no, not to the most savage of them all, like those that dwell in the uncultivated region of *Scythia**; nor

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* *Scythia* was a vast country, that lay with great extent both in *Asia* and *Europe*, and was divided into several parts in the *Asiatic* and *European* di-

stricts; and the *Scythians* were an exceeding brutish, savage sort of people, a large account of whom, and of *Scythia*, may be seen under this word, in *Collier's* great

to masters or servants, free-men or slaves : But as to persons of all these external characters, without regarding or disregarding them, for the sake of any such distinctions, Christ is their all who believe in him : He is all in the whole of their salvation ; and they are *complete in him* : (chap. ii. 10.) He is all in all their hopes and confidences, esteem and comforts ; in all their privileges and enjoyments ; and in all their acceptance with God, preservation and security for eternal life ; and he is all in the effectual workings of his Spirit in them all : So that nothing is to be regarded by any of them, in point of saving advantage, but Christ ; and nothing will stand them in stead, but an interest in him, *who of God is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that no flesh might glory in his presence, but be that glorieth, might glory in the Lord.* (1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31.)

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

12 In an entire dependence therefore on Christ, as those *whom God hath chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that ye should be holy, and without blame before him in love*; (Eph. i. 4.) whom he hath accordingly formed unto holiness, and regards as the objects of his special love ; let it be your great concern and endeavour, that, instead of the works of the flesh, which ye are to put off, (ver. 8.) ye may assume the practice of, and, as it were, clothe yourselves with the tenderest compassion toward the miserable and distressed, in imitation of your heavenly Father, who is eminently merciful, (Luke vi. 36.) with a generous, friendly and benevolent temper and behaviour towards one another, and towards all men ; (Gal. vi. 10.) with modest thoughts of yourselves, and condescension to persons of low degree ; with gentleness, mildness, and candour, towards all ye have to do with, as learning of our great Lord, who was *meek and lowly in heart* ; (Mat. xi. 29.) and with persevering patience under repeated and long-continued provocations, in consideration of God's long-suffering toward you.

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against

13 Let all this be attended with a bearing and forbearing spirit, one towards another, (Eph. iv. 2.) under various infirmities ; and with a mutually forgiving temper in case of offences : So that if there be any one, that thinks himself to be injured by, or to

N O T E.

great historical dictionary : And as the *Greeks* were the most learned and polite, and the *Scythians* the most barbarous of the *Gentiles*, the paraphrase has taken in a view of the different ranks of all na-

tions among the *Gentiles*, as well as of the general distinction of them from the *Jews*, and the different ranks of people among both.

gainst any: even
as Christ forgave
you, so also do ye.

14 And above
all these things,
put on charity,
which is the bond
of perfectness.

15 And let the
peace of God rule
in your hearts, to
the which also ye
are called in one
body; and be ye
thankful.

16 Let the word
of Christ dwell in
you richly in all
wisdom; teaching
and

to have matter of complaint against, one or another of his brethren; as ye hope and profess, that Christ, in the greatness of his love, and at the expence of his own blood, hath freely and fully pardoned all your trespasses, which are infinitely greater than any that can be committed against you: Even so, in imitation of, and influenced by the riches of his grace, and in obedience unto his awful injunctions, (*Mat. vi. 12, 14, 15.*) be ye ready to forgive one another those comparatively small offences that any may have given you.

14 And let it be your principal care to put on brotherly Christian love, like an upper-garment *, to spread over, and add a beauteous lustre to all these graces; even that love, which, in its principle, tendency, and design, is the fulfilling of the law, (*Rom. xiii. 10.*) and is the noblest bond of union and peace, (*Eph. iv. 3.*) to keep every other grace in its regular exercise, and to knit all the members of Christ together in the most perfect harmony, till the whole mystical body shall grow up in all things to its perfect stature in him. (*Eph. iv. 11, —15.*)

15 And for the better cultivating this brotherly love, see to it, that a sense of your being in a state of friendship with God, through Jesus Christ, which is a *peace that passeth all understanding*, (*Phil. iv. 7.*) engage you to the love and practice of that excellent peace and concord among yourselves, which God is the author and approver of, and enjoins †: Let this peace, in both these views, enthrone itself, and have the governing sway in your hearts; (*us* *us*) into which happy state of peace with God, and one another, ye are called by the grace of the gospel, as all of you together, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are *one body of Christ, and members in particular*: (*1 Cor. xii. 27.*) And, in reflection on this, let all the powers of your souls unite in gratitude and praise to the God of such a wonderful mercy.

16 In order to your being established in an abiding sense of this peace with God, and in this harmony with your Christian-brethren, and indeed in every grace before-mentioned; let the whole word of God, which

N O T E S.

* *And above all things* (*ἐν ᾧ πάντες ἐκτρέφονται*) may as well be rendered, *over all these*, meaning the virtues or graces before-mentioned; and both senses are attended to in the paraphrase.

† *As the peace of God* is said to *pass all understanding*, in *Phil. iv. 7.* which was wrote about the same time with this epistle, and is the only place besides, where this phrase, *the peace of God*, is used, we are led to understand it here,

as well as there, of the peace that believers have *with God*: But as *peace one with another* seems most agreeable to the general scope of this context, I think it ought not to be excluded; and as a *sense* of peace with God is the best foundation of, and has the most powerful influence to promote peace among fellow-Christians, I see no impropriety in supposing, that the apostle might comprehend them both.

and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

which Christ is the author of, as it was indited by his Spirit; (1 Pet. i. 11.) and particularly let the gospel, of which he is not only the author, but also the main subject, (Rom. i. 3.) have a permanent and predominant residence, not in your heads only, but in your hearts, with all the riches of spiritual knowledge and understanding, that are to be derived from it, for making a wise and proper use of its various parts on all occasions, to the glory of God, your direction in the way of duty, and edification unto complete salvation; and for living abundantly under the power of it: And be ye mutually helpful in instructing and exciting one another to bless and praise the Lord, as by all other means in public or private; so particularly in the ordinance of *singing with the voice together*, (Isa. lii. 8.) and thereby celebrating the honours of his name in sacred poetry; some compositions of which may be styled *psalms*, others *hymns*, and other *spiritual songs*; which God has provided for the use of his church in his word, and in occasional productions of inspired prophets, under an immediate afflatus of the Spirit: (see the note on Eph. v. 19.) And which ever of these ye may join in, it ought to be, not only with a graceful harmonious voice, but with spiritual affections, and an exercise of suitable graces in your hearts towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and God in him, which is the best of all melody; the sweetest to your own souls, and most acceptable to him.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

17 And in all cases, as well as these, whatsoever ye engage in, whether in discourse or behaviour, in public or private, relating to the civil or religious life, let it be with a conscientious regard to the authority and command of the Lord Jesus Christ, with an humble dependence on him for all direction, assistance and acceptance, and with an eye to his, together with his Father's glory; and let it be attended with thanksgivings *always for all things*, (Eph. v. 20.) to God, even his Father and your Father in him, as the great Mediator, on whose account all blessings come to you; and therefore through whom all thank-offerings for what ye have received, as well as all prayers for what ye need, are to be presented to God, that they may be well-pleasing in his sight: (Heb. xiii. 15, 16. and 1 Pet. ii. 5.) These are duties that belong to you all in common; but there are others, that are peculiar to your different civil stations.

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

18 As Christian religion does not dissolve, but strengthen moral obligations to *relative* duties, which the law of nature requires, whether it be toward believers or unbelievers, or toward *Jewish* or *Gentile*

Gentile converts, that may have different sentiments as to some religious principles and practices; so believing women among you, that are in a married state, ought to behave in a meek and submissive manner toward their own lawful husbands, as far as they can do it with a safe conscience, and as is consistent with their superior relation to the Lord Jesus, and becoming their Christian character. (See the note on *Eph.* v. 21.)

19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

19 On the other hand, those of you that bear the relation of husbands, ought to treat your wives with all tenderness, kindness, and affection; to delight in their company, and do all that in you lies for their temporal and spiritual ease, comfort, and happiness; and not to exercise a severe and arbitrary lordship over them, or break out into furious and passionate expressions against them, or use them ill by words or blows, or go about to lay any hardships upon them, that would be grievous to them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

20 Let those of you, who are sons or daughters, remember that your natural obligations remain in full force to your parents, whether fathers or mothers, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, Christians or heathens; and ye ought accordingly to make conscience of paying all filial duty to them, in obedience to their just and reasonable commands in every thing that is lawful for parents to enjoin, and for children to do*: For this is agreeable to the will of Christ, and acceptable to God through him.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

21 On the other side, it ought to be the conscientious and tender care of those of you that are parents, whether fathers or mothers, (see the note on *Eph.* vi. 4.) that ye study the tempers of your children, and endeavour to establish your authority over them, and allure them to their duty, by prudent, kind, and gentle methods, and never sour their minds by furious or opprobrious language, or by unreasonable impositions, nor unmerciful corrections, to irritate their angry passions: Take heed of all such harsh treatment, (*ὡς περ ἀδελφῶν*) that their spirits may not be broke,

N O T E.

* *In all things* must be understood here, with regard to *children*, and *ver.* 22. with regard to *servants*. under a limitation to *all lawful things*: For it could not be the duty of Christian children, or servants, to obey their heathen parents, or masters, were they to command them to renounce their faith in Christ, and profession of his name, and to worship idols, or commit any other iniquity; nor could it be the duty of those that were led into the liberty of the gos-

pel, to obey their parents, or masters, in case they should command them to observe the rites and ceremonies of the *Mosaic* law: And therefore as *wives* are to submit themselves to their husbands, only so far as is *fit in the Lord*, *ver.* 18. so *servants* are to obey their masters according to the flesh, *ver.* 22. only in things that relate to the body and civil concerns, or that their own consciences approve of in religion.

22 Servants, obey in all things your masters, according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing, that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong, shall receive

broke, and they disheartened, and filled with prejudice both against yourselves and against the gospel, which ye profess, but are far from recommending by such an ill temper and behaviour toward them.

22 As to those of you that are servants, or even bond-slaves, whether to Christians or heathens, that are your lawful masters in things pertaining to the body and temporal affairs, ye ought to be very diligent and faithful in executing the trusts, and doing the business they commit to you, and in making their interest your own, and fulfilling all their commands, as far as they do not interfere with your duty toward your higher Master in heaven, relating to the concerns of religion, and of your own souls; (see the note on ver. 20.) and ye ought cheerfully to attend to their service, not merely while ye are under their eye, as persons that seek only to approve yourselves to men, and gain their favour; but in the sincerity of your hearts at all times, as in the sight and presence of the all-seeing God, and as persons that act from a principle of conscience towards him, and are most of all concerned to be approved of him in all your ways, and to do nothing that is offensive to him, whether any one else be present to observe you or not.

23 And whatever service ye are called to engage in, it ought to be, not merely by constraint, much less with grudging or reluctance; but with a willing and ready mind, from a sense of duty toward the Lord Jesus, in obedience to his commands, and for his honour and glory, as ye are professors of his name; and not from a selfish mercenary spirit, that aims at only pleasing men.

24 To excite and encourage you to all cheerfulness and fidelity herein, ye ought to be firmly persuaded, and seriously to consider, that whatsoever ill treatment and unrighteous returns ye may meet with, instead of a suitable reward from your masters on earth, ye shall receive a gracious reward of the heavenly inheritance from the Lord, the great Judge of all, at the last day; and so ye (though servants) shall be dealt with as sons and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: For in doing your duty to earthly masters, ye really pay honour and service to the Lord Jesus himself, who is the best of all masters, whose providence has placed you in that state of servitude, and whose word requires a becoming behaviour answerable to it, that ye may adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. (Tit. ii. 10.)

25 But he that is guilty of any injustice, whether as a servant, in neglecting his master's business, or purloining

receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons.

purloining his goods; or, as a master, in rendering evil for good, or with-holding what is due to his servant, shall receive a just and impartial recompence of reward for all his iniquitous doings: (*Heb. ii. 2.*) For in the judgment of the great day, our blessed Lord will not be biassed by any external circumstances, nor make any difference between masters and servants, bond or free, in favour of one, or in prejudice to the other, on account of the different relations they bear one to another in this world; but he will pass a righteous sentence upon all, according to the evidence that shall arise for or against them, from their moral and religious characters, whatsoever their civil station has been upon earth. (See the note on *Eph. vi. 8.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what elevation of soul should they, that are risen with Christ, follow their ascended Saviour from earth to his exalted state in heaven, where he lives for them, and is the source and security of spiritual life to them, and will at length give them an illustrious appearance with himself, in all possible glory! He has already made a happy change upon them, who were once disobedient, and lived and walked in such a sinful course, as exposed them to divine wrath; but, by the efficacy of regenerating grace, they have now discarded the whole body of sin, with all its members; and have assumed a new form in knowledge and righteousness according to the holy image of God, in which he at first created man. O blessed dispensation of gospel-grace, in which believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and people of all ranks in outward privileges and worldly circumstances, are one body, and equally partakers of all spiritual blessings in Christ, who is all in the whole of their salvation that are the chosen and beloved of God! How powerful and engaging are their obligations to mortify every sinful propensity of body and mind; to lay aside all wrathful dispositions of heart, and all blasphemous, unseemly, false, and deceitful expressions of the lips; to be clothed with the tenderest compassion and humility, patience and forbearance one towards another; and to be of a forgiving spirit to those that have offended them, in imitation of, and as influenced by, the infinitely greater forgiveness that Christ has extended to themselves! And O with what beauty, harmony, and union, would Christians shine, were they to cultivate mutual love, and study the things that make for peace, under a governing sense of God's being reconciled to them; and were their hearts enlarged in gratitude and praise, and enriched with all spiritual wisdom, and every grace, for their own and others edification, in singing the honours of Christ's name, and in adorning their holy profession, by doing every thing, in word and deed, with a dependence on him, and in obedience to his authority over them! This is the best way of shewing forth their thankfulness to God the Father, through Jesus Christ, for all the benefits he has bestowed upon them. And as ever they would acquit themselves with honour to their holy profession, they should make conscience of fulfilling the natural and civil duties of their various relations in the present life. Wives should behave with due subjection to their husbands in all things that are fit and proper for them, as members of Christ: And husbands should be affectionately tender toward their wives, and labour against every thing that might make them uncomfortable. Children ought readily to obey their parents in all their lawful commands, as ever they would fulfil their duty toward them according to the will of God: And parents should take heed of discouraging their children by any severe treatment of them. Servants, considering themselves as continually under God's eye, should always attend to their master's business, with as much cheerfulness and fidelity in their absence, as in their presence; and should do every thing from a principle of religion, as being desirous of pleasing God, rather than men; and as being assured, that, in doing the duty of their stations, they serve the Lord Christ, and that he will graciously honour them with the reward of an eternal inheritance.

And O what an awful check would it be upon all iniquity, were we to consider, that the righteous Judge of all, who has no respect to any one's outward condition in this world, will most certainly render vengeance to them that practise unrighteous dealings with others!

C H A P. IV.

The apostle exhorts masters to do their duty toward servants, 1. Recommends to persons of all ranks the general duties of perseverance in prayer, and Christian prudence in behaviour and speech, 2,—6. Refers them to Tychicus and Onesimus, for an account of the state of his affairs, 7,—9. Sends salutations from several by name, together with his own; and, adding a charge to Archippus; concludes with his usual benediction, 10,—18.

TEXT.

MASTERS, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

PARAPHRASE.

AS Christian servants ought to be obedient to their masters in all lawful things, (*chap. iii. 24.* *) so those of you that stand in the relation of masters, ought not to think yourselves lawless, or at liberty to treat any of your servants in an arbitrary tyrannical way; no, not even such as may be slaves and heathens; but ye should deal justly and equitably with them, in taking good care of them, not withholding their wages, or any proper provisions, according to their wants, and your contracts with them; (*Jam. v. 4.*) nor ought ye to lay any more burdens, or harder services upon them, than they are well able to bear; nor to be severe in your threatnings and punishments, beyond their deserts; nor backward to give suitable encouragements to fidelity in your service; as seriously considering that ye yourselves, as well as they, are under the command of, and accountable to your great Lord and Master in heaven, who continually observes you, and is infinitely more above you, than any of you can be above the meanest of them; and will deal with you in the great day according to your dealings with them. (*Chap. iii. 25.*)

2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving:

2 To proceed to the duties that are incumbent, not only on masters, but upon you all; Whatsoever be your relations in life †, ye ought to be constant,

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NOTES.

* * As this verse concludes the exhortations to *relatives* duties, it might have been much better joined to the *third*, than made the beginning of the *fourth* chapter. And then the last verse of the third chapter would the more easily be considered as referring to *masters*, as well as *servants*.

† If *continue in prayer* be considered

in connection with the preceding verse, which speaks of *masters giving to their servants that which is just and equal*, it intimates that one part of the duty of Christian masters is to pray daily with, and for their servants; and to be concerned for, and do what in them lies to take care of their *souls*, as well as *bodies*, and to bring them into a compliance with a holy

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at set seasons, in daily prayer to the God of all grace, in the name of Christ, and by the assistance of his Spirit, for personal and relative, public and private, temporal and spiritual blessings, whether in the closet, family, or religious assemblies, as there may be opportunity; and to watch for all special calls of Providence, and needful assistances from above, that ye may be continually ready to engage in this duty, and persevere in it, though ye may not immediately see the answers of your prayers: Ye should also watch against all hindrances, that would interfere with this duty, and against all deadness in your own spirits, that there may be no indifference, trifling, or wanderings in performing it: And always take care that, with supplications for the mercies ye need, grateful praises and chearful thanksgivings to God be joined for what he has favoured you with, relating to this world, and that which is to come. (*Phil.* iv. 6.)

3 Withal, praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

3 And in all your addresses to the throne of grace, I earnestly beseech you to be in a special manner mindful of me and *Timothy*, (*chap.* i. 1.) and other brethren that labour with us in the word and doctrine; praying that God would give us opportunity, and enable us, with liberty of spirit and expression, and with faith and boldness, to lay open the deep things of God, and *preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles*, (*Ephes.* iii. 8.) for the doing of which I am, even now, a prisoner in bonds.

4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

4 I beg your prayers particularly for me, in my present confined and afflicted circumstances, that, as far as Providence shall favour me with opportunities for it, I may be eminently assisted in setting forth the Redeemer's glory, and the whole counsel of God, in such a free, extensive, plain, and open manner, and with such a frame of spirit as becomes me, and as the duty of my office and the importance of the subject call for.

5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

5 As to your own behaviour in the world, see that the whole of your conversation be managed with all circumspection, and Christian prudence, towards unbelievers, and all that are without the pale of the visible church, that ye may not be defiled by them; but may be useful and exemplary to them, and win upon them, and never give them any occasion to think, or speak evil of the doctrines and ways of the Lord: And, in this manner, labour to improve every

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holy resolution, like that of *Joshua*, (*chap.* xxiv. 15.) *As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord.* However, this and the following exhortations, certainly in-

clude masters, and all other professing Christians, whatever their civil stations be in the world.

ry opportunity of filling up the duties of your respective stations; of doing good to your very enemies, and of preventing such offences, as might provoke them to raise persecutions against you, and thereby shorten your days, or cut you off from further services to Christ and his cause. (See *Ephes.* v. 15, 16.)

6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

6 With the like important views, take heed that your discourse, on all occasions, be as becomes persons whose hearts are seasoned with grace, and whose language tends to recommend the grace of God, and promote a gracious spirit in others; and so is preserved from corruption, (as meat is kept wholesome, and free from putrefaction, by the salt that cures and seasons it, and makes it savoury) that ye may know how to give a good account of the reason of the hope that is in you, with modesty, meekness, and wisdom; (1 *Pet.* iii. 15.) and how to answer scrupulous doubts, and serious inquiries on one hand, and perverse cavillings and captious objections, on the other, with respect to points of Christian faith, duty, and experience, to every one that would propose any proper question to you about them.

7 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord:

7 As to what concerns myself, and the situation of my affairs, both with respect to outward circumstances, and inward supports and refreshments, which I know ye would be glad to hear of, I have ordered *Tychicus*, who brings this epistle, to relate them to you at large, by word of mouth; and ye may depend upon the account he will give you of them; he being a dearly beloved brother in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, and a conscientious, faithful minister of Christ, and diligent fellow-labourer with me in the work of the Lord.

8 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;

8 And, being as desirous to know how matters stand with you, as ye can be to hear how it fares with me, I have sent him, with a special design, that he may get a thorough insight into the state of your religious concerns, in order to his reporting it to me; and that he may administer relief and comfort to you, under all your trials, both by good counsel, and by acquainting you with the remarkable appearances of God's standing by me, and with the success of my preaching the gospel, even in my bonds.

9 With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you.

9 For which purpose, I have also joined with him *Onesimus*, who, whatsoever he formerly were, is now, through the wonderful power of divine grace, become a sincere and dearly beloved brother in Christ *;

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and

N O T E.

* *Onesimus* was that runaway that to *Rome*, was converted by the apostle had eloped from his master *Philemon*, *Paul* there. (See for an account of him and purloined his goods; but, straying in the epistle to *Philemon*, with the para-

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They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.

and who, being one of your own city, and now a real convert, may be the more welcome, and acceptable to you. These two faithful brethren will give you a just and particular account of every thing that passes here at *Rome*, and in this neighbourhood, relating to my sufferings, and supports, and behaviour under them, and to what God is still doing by, and for me.

10 *Aristarchus* my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and *Marcus*, sister's son to *Barnabas*, (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him;)

10 *Aristarchus* the *Macedonian*, who was exposed to great danger for my sake, (*Acts* xix. 29.) and is now a prisoner with me at *Rome*, desires to be affectionately remembered to you all, (see the note on *Rom.* xvi. 3.) as doth *John Mark*, nephew to *Barnabas*, my old friend and colleague in apostolic labours: (*Acts* xiii. 2, 3, 4, &c.) And if this his near kinsman should come to *Colosse*,* I desire that ye would receive him in the most friendly manner, and treat him with all Christian respect and kindness, according to the recommendations ye have already had, and are now given of him, as worthy of it.

11 And *Jesus*, which is called *Justus*, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

11 Another of my fellow-labourers also, who goes by two names, one of which in *Greek* is *Jesus*, which answers to that of *Joshua* in *Hebrew*, and the other in *Latin* is *Justus*, signifying *Just*. This upright man joins with the other two in Christian salutations. All these, though *Jewish* converts, bear the sincerest respect to you, without the least prejudice against any of you, on account of your being *Gentile*-believers; † and they are the only ministers of that denomination, that are with me, and have joined their labours with mine, during my confinement, in helping forward the work of the Lord, by preaching the same gospel with myself, unto the propagation and enlargement of the kingdom of grace, which God has set up, under the gospel dispensation, in this world, in order to its being perfected in all its felicities, and glories, in the world to come. These have been of great use and comfort to me by this means, as well as by their agreeable company, and various assistances and reliefs under all my sufferings for Christ.

12 To

NOTES.

paraphrase and notes upon it.) He was of spirit. This *Mark* is supposed to have been the writer of the gospel that bears by this time, was a member of that church; and others, that he was employed in the work of the ministry.

* *Mark* had before this time regained an interest in the apostle's affection and confidence, notwithstanding the great displeasure he formerly had against him, for leaving him and *Barnabas* at *Pamphilia*; (*Acts* xv. 38, 39.) which shews the excellence of the apostle's forgiving

† The apostle *Peter* is not mentioned with those of the circumcision, that sent their salutations, and are said to be the only fellow-workers of the *Jewish* sort, and a comfort to the apostle *Paul*. 'Tis therefore certain that either *Peter* was not then at *Rome*, or that he acted very unworthy of his character.

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13 For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

14 Luke the beloved physician, and Demas greet you.

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

16 And when this epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the church of the

12 To these I must add some others of the *Gentile* sort, to whom ye are very dear; as particularly *Epaphras*, who is not only a *Gentile* convert, but one of your own city, much devoted to your service, and a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, (see the note on *Phil. ii. 25.*) sends his sincere respects to you; and shews how much he has you upon his heart, by his constantly remembering you at the throne of grace, and labouring with great earnestness and fervour, as it were to an agony, (*αγωνίζομαι*) in his wrestlings with God in prayer for you, that ye may continue stedfast in the faith, as complete Christians, that are fully instructed in the doctrines and duties of the gospel, and eminent in your conformity to them, like perfect men in Christ; being (*τετελειωμένοι*) filled with his light and grace, according to the utmost extent of that revelation which God has made of his mind and will, and in such a manner as may be every way acceptable to him.

13 For I must needs bear witness to this excellent laborious brother, from what I have observed of him, and heard from his own mouth, that he is zealously solicitous for your present and eternal happiness; and has a like warm and tender concern for the prosperity of your two neighbouring churches*, one of which is seated at *Laodicea*, and the other at *Hierapolis*, a large and populous city of *Phrygia*.

14 The Evangelist *Luke*, who was brought up for a physician, but is now a dear brother in the Lord, devoting himself entirely to his service, for healing the spiritual distempers of perishing souls; and *Demas*, another ministering servant, join in sending their Christian respects. (See the note on 2 *Tim. iv. 10.*)

15 Let my own hearty love be presented to those brethren in Christ that belong to the church at *Laodicea*; and in a very particular manner, to the well-known *Nymphas* † and his Christian family, which for its regularity, purity, religious worship and order, under his conduct, is like a New Testament church.

16 And it is my express order that, after this epistle shall have been distinctly read through, according to my design, in a public manner among you, the church at *Colosse*, ye take care that, either it, or an exact copy of it, be sent to, and also read in the church

NOTES.

* It is probable that *Epaphras* had been remarkably instrumental in forming, or building up these churches; and therefore had a peculiar affection to, and concern for them.

† We know no more of *Nymphas* than

what is here said of him; but he seems to have been a noted man of eminent piety, and strict religion in the orders of his Christian family. (See the note on *Rom. xvi. 5.*)

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the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

church that usually meets for the worship of God at *Laodicea**; and that a certain *Laodicean* letter be likewise communicated to, and publicly read among you.

17 All that I have further to add for your direction is, that, as ye are surrounded with subtle adversaries, who seek to pervert you; (*chap. ii. 8.*) ye would, in a prudent, friendly, and respectful manner, admonish *Archippus*, a ministering servant among you, (see the note on *Philem. ver. 2.*) and remind him of the great need there is of his utmost vigilance, saying, We entreat you, dear Sir, always to bear upon your heart the excellent nature, design, and importance of, and to lay yourself out, in the name and strength of Christ, with all wisdom, diligence, and faithfulness, in discharging that sacred office which you have been honoured with, by the favour and authority of the Lord Jesus, and for his glory, that you may explain, confirm, vindicate, and enforce the great doctrines of divine revelation, and exemplify them in your own spirit and conduct; may reprove sin, and confute error; may carefully fill up the duties of your trust in their whole extent, and persevere therein all your days, to the comfort of your own and other souls; and may do all that in you lies for the furtherance of the gospel, in the conversion of sinners, and edification of the saints.

18 The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

18 To conclude after my usual manner in all my epistles to the churches, (see the note on *Rom. xvi. 22.*) I subjoin my best wishes to you all, in my own hand-writing: And to give this, together with all that has been said in the above letter, the greater weight with you, as also to engage your most earnest prayers for me, remember it comes from an apostle, who is now suffering with cheerfulness and patience in bonds, for preaching the gospel to you *Gentiles*; (*Eph. iii. 1.*) and who affectionately prays, that the free favour of God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, (*2 Cor. xiii. 14.*) and all its precious fruits, manifestations, and effects, in a work of grace here, and in glory hereafter, may abound toward you. In testimony of my sincerity in this benediction, and of my hope that it will be fully answered, I say, *Amen.*

RECOL-

N O T E.

* Various have been the conjectures about this epistle, which is lost, unless it were that, which some very improbably have supposed, the apostle wrote from *Laodicea* to the *Ephesians*: It rather seems not to have been any epistle wrote by him, but wrote to him from *Laodicea*, relating to the state of affairs there,

and in neighbouring churches, which, perhaps might give occasion to, and cast some light upon this epistle to the *Colossians*; and therefore might be proper to be read in the church at *Colosse*, which, doubtless, knew what epistle is here referred to.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what equity, mildness, and mercy, would masters treat their servants, were they deeply impressed with the thought that they themselves have a greater Master in heaven, to whom they must give an account of all their behaviour toward those that are under them! And O what need is there of daily prayers, with thanksgivings, in the family and closet, for ourselves and others; and particularly for Christ's ministering servants, that they may be wise and faithful, courageous and successful, in unfolding the mysteries of the gospel, without restraint from their adversaries! And what need have Christians of wisdom from above, to be have prudently towards unbelievers, that they, by word and deed, may recommend religion to them, and make a proper apology on all occasions for it! With what pleasure should ministers own, and speak well of their faithful fellow-labourers, and fellow-sufferers, of every denomination! With what earnest wrestlings, (as all our prayers ought to be) at the throne of grace, should they plead for such churches, especially, as they are most immediately concerned with, that they may be confirmed in the whole will of God! What a tender sympathizing spirit should they have, and shew toward them! How cordially should they salute all the saints, and particularly those who are eminent for godliness, and under whose conduct their families are lively emblems of a church of Christ! And how cheerfully should they recommend it to them, to maintain and express the like affectionate wishes one for another! The holy scriptures are written for their use; they have a common interest and concern in them, and ought carefully to read them, and to be solicitous, that they, who minister in sacred things, may be faithful in the discharge of the trust that Christ has committed to them: and when any of them are in bonds for the gospel's sake, How ought churches to lay it to heart, that they may be enabled to make suitable improvements of such a providence, for their own establishment in the truth, to which those noble confessors bear their testimony with faith and patience! For these, and all other valuable purposes, may grace, the fountain of all good, be with them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth! *Amen.*

A PRAC

A PRACTICAL
E X P O S I T I O N
OF THE
FIRST EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL
TO THE
T H E S S A L O N I A N S,
IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E.

THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE
THESSALONIANS.

THESSALONICA, which signifies the victory of *Theſſalia*, being rebuilt by the famous *Philip of Macedon*, was ſo called in memory of the conqueſt he obtained over the *Theſſalians*, and was the metropolis of *Macedonia*. The church gathered there conſiſted of converts, partly from among the *Jews* and proſelytes of the gate, as appears from *Acts* xvii. 4.; and partly from among the idolatrous *Gentiles*, as appears from *chap.* i. 9. of this epiſtle. They were exceeding dear to the apoſtle *Paul*, as eminent ſeals of his miniſtry, which had been lately bleſſed to their converſion; and he was tenderly and ſolicitouſly concerned for them; becauſe, ſoon afterwards, he was violently driven away from them, all of a ſudden, through the furious aſſaults of the unbelieving *Jews*, *Acts* xvii. 1,—10. which prevented his miniſtring at *Theſſalonica*, ſo long as he could have wiſhed, for their further eſtabliſhment in the faith.

He was very deſirous to have returned to them, and attempted it once and again; but Satan by his wicked inſtruments hindered him, as he tells us, *chap.* ii. 18.; and, fearing leſt that buſy adverſary might have unſettled them, he ſent *Timothy* to them; and, upon his return with comfortable tidings of their ſtate, wrote this Epiſtle to encourage their continuing to ſtand faſt in the faith, and not to be ſtumbled at the tribulations that beſel him for the goſpel's ſake, as in other places, ſo while he was among them.

This is the *fiſt* of all the epiſtles that he wrote, which, as is ſuppoſed, was about the year of our Lord 52; and it is generally agreed, that he ſent it, not from *Athens*, as the poſtſcript ſays, but from *Corinth*, about a year after he had been at *Theſſalonica*.

He begins it with a ſalutation and affectionate thankſgiving to God for his diſtinguiſhing grace, as it was evidently maniſeſted in its

remarkable effects upon them. *chap. i.* And to induce them to persevere in the faith, which they had received, he reminds them of his own unblamable behaviour, together with his labours and sufferings, and the success of his ministry among them; and expresses his earnest desire of visiting them again, out of his great love to them, whom he looked upon as his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing, *chap. ii.* But as he could not go himself, he, in his tender care for them, sends *Timothy* to see how matters stood with them, and to comfort them under their tribulations, and establish them in the faith; and when *Timothy* returned and gave a good account of them, it revived his soul, and he heartily prayed, that, if it were the will of God, he might have an opportunity of making them another visit; but, whether this might be so ordered by Providence, or not, that the Lord would establish them in faith, love, and holiness, *chap. iii.* And, lest he should not be able to see them again, he refers them to the directions he had given while he was with them, to guard them against all iniquity, and particularly against every kind of uncleanness; commends them for their brotherly love, and entreats them to abound therein yet more and more, and to acquit themselves with diligence and honour in the duties of their several stations: And, to comfort them under the loss of their deceased Christian friends, he sets before them the blissful state to which they shall be raised, when all the saints, both living and dead, shall meet together to be with Christ at his coming to judge the world, *chap. iv.* And as the particular time of Christ's coming to judgment is unknown, and will be, on a sudden, at unawares, though certain in its season, he exhorts them to constant watchfulness, and preparation for it; and then adds some admonitions relating to their decent behaviour toward those that were set over them in the Lord, and towards all they had to do with; suggesting also several other important duties, in which they were all concerned; and concludes with an excellent prayer for them, and earnest desire of theirs for himself, and with salutations, and a charge that this Epistle be read in their church, with whom he leaves his benediction, *chap. v.*

C H A P. I.

The apostle salutes the church at Thessalonica, and blesses God for them, in reflection on their faith, love, and patience, as evident tokens of their election, which was manifested in the efficacious manner with which the gospel came to them, 1,—5. And describes its powerful, exemplary, and famous effects upon their hearts and lives, 6,—10.

TEXT.

PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ: grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL* together with *Silas* and *Timothy*, his assistants in the work of the Lord at *Thessalonica*, send greeting, (see the notes on *Acts* xv. 22. and *1 Cor.* i. 1.) to the church of Christ, which has lately been planted by means of our ministry, (*Acts* xvii. 1,—4, 14.) and ordinarily assembles, for religious worship and discipline, at that renowned metropolis of *Macedonia*, and consists of believers in God the Father, as the only true God, in distinction from the idolatrous *Gentiles*, who worship them which by nature are no gods; (*Gal.* iv. 8.) and of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only true Messiah, (see the notes on *John* xiv. 1. and xvii. 3.) in distinction from the unbelieving *Jews*, who deny him; and so we regard you as persons that are in union, and have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (*1 John* i. 3.) May all the riches of divine love and favour, which is the fountain of every blessing; and, as the fruit of this, may all manner of prosperity, inclusive of every desirable sort of peace with God, and others, and in your own souls, be multiplied abundantly to all and every one of you, according to the scheme of salvation, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator and Peace-maker, who has purchased all blessings for us by his blood; and freely communicates them to us by his Spirit, in an inseparable concurrence with the Father. (See the note on *Rom.* i. 7.)

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention

2 We daily offer up our cheerful and solemn thanks to God on behalf of your whole church, and mention you in our stated and occasional prayers with gratitude

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N O T E.

* As these *Thessalonians* were the seals of *Paul's* apostleship, and there were none among them, that pretended to dispute his authority, or vie with him in it; there was no occasion for his asserting it here, as he does in his inscription of the epistles to churches in which there were false apostles, that would depreciate him, and set themselves up in

opposition to him: And, perhaps, as this was the first epistle that he wrote, his great modesty might restrain him from asserting his apostolic character, till he found a necessity for it; because he humbly thought himself to be the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called an apostle. (*1 Cor.* xv. 9.)

mention of you in our prayers ;

3 Remembering, without ceasing, your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God, and our Father ;

tude and praise, and with fervent supplications for his perfecting all that concerns you ;

3 Being excited hereunto by a constant habitual sense, and frequent recollection, of the unfeigned faith, which God has wrought in you, and which shews itself to be, not a dead, but living faith, by its genuine operation unto all evangelical obedience : We have also a joyful remembrance of your ardent love to Christ, and to all that belong to him, which generously exerted itself in the great pains ye took to succour and secure us, when we were in the utmost danger at *Thessalonica* ; (Acts xvii. 5,—10.) as also in performing every office of kindness one to another, and to all the saints and servants of Christ, for his sake : And we reflect with pleasure on the fruits of this faith and love, as they have produced in you a lively hope of eternal life, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and *that* with patient continuance in well-doing under all your tribulations ; and with a quiet waiting for God's time of crowning your hopes with enjoyment : (see *Heb. x. 36.*) We can solemnly appeal to the all-seeing God, for the sincerity of our professions of thankfulness, and constant remembrance of you in our prayers * ; and are firmly persuaded that your faith, love, and hope, are exercised with all uprightness of heart, as in the sight and presence of God, even your and our Father, who has made us his children, by adopting and regenerating grace.

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

4 From these peculiar and evident fruits of God's distinguishing favour to you, our dear brethren beloved of the Lord, and of us for his sake†, we, arguing

NOTES.

* In the sight of God, or before God, (*ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ Θεοῦ*) may refer, either to the apostle's blessing God for, and affectionately remembering the *Thessalonians* ; or to their work of faith and labour of love, and patience of hope, according to the different turns given to this clause in the paraphrase.

† According to the different ways of pointing this sentence in the *Greek*, (*ἀγαπῶντες ὑμᾶς οὗτοι οὗτοι τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν*) of God may be joined either to beloved, or to your election, which proceeded from the free love of God : And the apostle's knowing the election of these *Thessalonians* seems to have been, not by an immediate revelation, but only in the ordinary way of charitably judging about the election of any person whatsoever : For, in the connection of this with the preceding and following verses, he man-

nifestly proves the cause from its effect, by which it may be known, and without which it is ordinarily impossible for any one to know it, with reference either to himself or others ; since, who are God's elect, is an entire secret in his own breast, till it appears by its distinguishing effects. (See 2 *Pet. i. 10.*) But had our apostle meant, as some would have it, that he knew God's purpose of receiving idolatrous *Gentiles* into the gospel-church, by immediate revelation, he had this knowledge before the *Thessalonians* were converted, or effectually called ; and therefore had no need of arguing from the effect to the cause to ascertain it. And as we must conclude from *Acts xvii. 4.* that this church consisted, not only of idolatrous *Gentiles*, but also of *Jews* and *proselytes* of the gate, that were converted there, the election here spoken

ing from the effect to the cause, justly conclude, and ye yourselves may be well satisfied, in the same way, that ye were freely chosen of God from all eternity to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. (2 Epist. ii. 13.)

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

5 For the gospel, which was preached by me, and by *Silas* and *Timothy*, (ver. 1.) my fellow-labourers among you, did not only reach your ears in the outward publication of it, as it did the ears of many others without any saving effect; but was also attended with a divine energy, which brought it home to your hearts, by the special operation of the Holy Spirit*, as well as was attested by the miracles he wrought in confirmation of its divine authority; and so it begat an unshaken satisfaction in your own souls, as to its truth and importance; and *good hope, through grace*, (2 Epist. ii. 16.) as to your own personal interests in its blessings, by means of what ye experienced of the great and excellent fruits of our ministry among you; in which (as ye well know) we laboured with great plainness of speech, meekness, and patience, and evident tokens of God's owning us, and giving us glorious success; notwithstanding all the violence and persecution that we endured on your account, in our love to you, and concern for your salvation.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

6 And such were the happy effects of the gospel's coming in this powerful manner to your souls, that immediately hereupon ye became imitators, (*μυνηται*) in faith, obedience, and patience, of us, who preached it, and *with whom ye consorted*; (Acts xvii. 4. see the note there) and ye were therein followers of our great Lord and Master himself, who is our only perfect example, and in whose steps we, and ye

N O T E S.

spoken of may well be supposed, not to be *national*, but to include persons of all those former characters; and to which ever of them the gospel became effectual, it was according to the election of grace, or the eternal purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Rom. xi. 5. and Eph. i. 4.) And that the election here intended was not barely to out-ward privileges, but to saving benefits, appears from the whole current of the context, which speaks of its peculiar, distinguishing, and sanctifying fruits, by means of the gospel; (see the note on ver. 5.) and from the apostle's like thanksgiving to God, for his having, from the beginning, chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, (4 Epist. ii. 13.) which is

more than being chosen to a belief of the gospel.

* The gospel's coming in power and in the Holy Ghost was more, than its coming with the attestation of miracles, as appears by its saving effects: For the Thessalonians thereupon became followers of the apostles and of the Lord, and were eminent examples of faith and holiness; and the idolatrous Gentiles among them turned from idols to serve the living and true God, with hope in Christ for deliverance from the wrath to come, which carried an undeniable proof of an effectual and saving change upon their hearts and lives, by the power of the Holy Ghost, with which the gospel came to them, as is represented in the following verses to the end of the chapter.

ye after us, trode, (1 Cor. xi. 1.) ye having firmly believed the word of his grace, even in the midst of the severest troubles, that both we and yourselves were exposed to for its sake; (*Acts* xvii. 5,—9.) and having received it with such inward consolation of the Holy Spirit, as made you a rich amends for them, sweetly supported you under them, and enabled you to bear them with Christian fortitude and patience.

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

7 So that ye yourselves became eminent, encouraging, and exemplary patterns (*εναυα*) of faith, patience, and holiness to all the believers round about you, in the two large Grecian provinces of Macedonia and Achaia, whether they were converted before you, as at *Philippi* in Macedonia; or after you, as at *Athens* and *Corinth* in Achaia. (See the note on ver. 8.)

8 For from you word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak any thing.

8 For the gospel, which is properly the word of the Lord Jesus, as he is the author and the main subject of it, having had such glorious success among you *, was published from thenceforward, with great reputation and advantage, and, as it were, with a loud echo of its praises, (*εκηχται*) far and near; in so much that the fame of your faith, as going out to, and terminating upon God in Christ, and manifested by its remarkably holy and exemplary fruits in your lives, (*εξηλυθεν*) has gone forth, and is commonly talked of, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but with still wider extent in various other places; so that we ourselves have no occasion to say any thing about it, as we otherwise should.

9 For they themselves shew of us, what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God,

9 For wherever we travel, we meet with people that are so full of it, as to anticipate us by beginning themselves to speak, with wonder and joy, of the happy effects of our ministry among you; as, particularly, they are ready to tell us what a chearful reception ye gave us, at our first coming among you, though it was in the most afflicted circumstances; (*ver. 6.*) and how, by means of our preaching, ye were so effectually wrought upon, as that those of you, who were heathens before, at once voluntarily and publicly renounced your former idolatry, and turned away with indignation and abhorrence from all

N O T E.

* The church of *Thessalonica*, I apprehend, was not the mother-church of Macedonia and Achaia, where the first converts were made, and from whence the gospel was first propagated in those provinces, as that at *Jerusalem* was of the Jews, and that at *Antioch* was of the Gentiles: For converts were made at *Philippi* in Macedonia before those of

Thessalonica, as appears from the 16th and 17th chapters of the *Acts*. But the gospel went from *Thessalonica* with the more evident and recommending demonstrations of its excellence and power, on account of its eminently wonderful effects upon them, as appeared in their exemplary behaviour.

all your fictitious deities to him, who is by nature God; believing in him, and yielding yourselves up entirely to him, to own, reverence, worship and adore, serve and glorify him, who has all perfection of life, blessedness and immortality, originally and essentially in, and of himself, and is the fountain of all sorts of life, whether natural, spiritual, or eternal, to others; and is the only true God in distinction from all mere creatures whatsoever, though not to the exclusion of the great Mediator, who is God, equally and together with the Father, in his original nature, in whom ye are also brought to believe, (see the notes on *John* xiv. 1. and xvii. 3.)

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.

10 And to wait with faith, preparation and patience, desire and joyful hope, under all present sufferings, for the glorious appearing of the eternal Son of the Father from heaven*, who will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe our testimony concerning him; (2 *Thes.* i. 10.) even Jesus, the divine Saviour, who, by his obedience and sufferings unto death purchased redemption for us, and by his almighty power (*ἐν αὐτοῦ*) does, and finally will deliver us from the dreadful wrath of an incensed God, that is coming apace, (*ἔρχομαι*) and will be ever incessantly coming, like a perpetual torrent of flaming vengeance, upon all the unbelieving and ungodly, to their everlasting destruction. (2 *Thes.* i. 8, 9.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a distinguishing mercy is it, when the gospel comes to any of our souls, not in word only, but with the special impressible power of the Holy Ghost! This is an evident proof of our eternal election, which can be known only by its fruits; such as faith, love, and patience under sufferings for Christ's sake; a thorough conversion in heart and life from every idol to the living and true God; a holy imitation of Christ and of his servants, as far as they follow him; and a hopeful expectation of his glorious coming to rid us of all our troubles. And how desirable is it to have these tokens of God's love, and of the efficacy of his grace in an eminent degree! Such receive his word with full assurance of its divine truth, excellence, and importance, and with joy in the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding all the tribulations that may befall them for its sake; they are a credit to the gospel, and noble examples to other believers; and are spoken of with admiration and joy to all that hear of them, and love the truth as it is in Jesus. With what pleasure do his ministering servants own one another, and reflect on every remarkable success of their labours, and on a testimony in the consciences of their hearers, that the power of the

N O T E.

* As the first coming of Christ was the object of the faith, desire and hope of the *Old Testament*-church, who waited for the consolation of Israel, and looked for redemption in Jerusalem: (*Luke* ii. 25, 38.) so his second coming is of the *New*, who are looking for the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: (*Col.* iii. 4.)

(*Titus* ii. 13.) They firmly believe that he will certainly come again, though they know not when; and therefore continue waiting for it with such exercises of grace, and performances of duty, as may best encourage their hope, that when he who is their life shall appear, they shall also appear with him in glory.

the Spirit is with them? They affectionately salute the dear converts; they abound in thankfulness for them, and continually recommend them in their prayers to the grace and blessing of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, in every remembrance of them. And O how animating to every true believer is the thought of the eternal Son of God, as the risen Jesus, who, having saved them from their sins, delivered them from the wrath to come.

C H A P. II.

The apostle, to encourage their progress in faith and holiness, reminds them of the manner of his preaching and behaviour among them, 1,—12. And of their receiving the gospel, as the word of God, which effectually worked in them, 13,—16. And assures them of his joy on their account, and his desire of coming to them again, 17,—20.

TEXT. A

FOR yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

PARAPHRASE.

WELL may I speak of you, as I have, (*chap. i.*) with the utmost affection, hope and confidence: For I can appeal to your own consciences, dear brethren, that ye yourselves experimentally know the glorious power and effect of my coming, with *Silas* and *Timothy*, (*chap. i. 1.*) to preach the gospel to you; that it was not (*xxx*) about vain and unprofitable things, nor with a mere empty sound of words; nor was it without good fruit, which we were assured it would not be, as from God's promise in general, (*Isa. lv. 11.*) so especially from the extraordinary manner in which he called us to preach it in *Macedonia*, (*Acts xvi. 9, 10.*) of which yours is the chief city; and therefore no ill treatment, that we before had met with in that province, could discourage our hopes of better success among you*.

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at *Philippi*, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

2 But even, after we had lately endured the greatest cruelties for the gospel's sake, before we could reach so far as you, and had been treated with the utmost indignity, as ye well know we were at *Philippi*, another famous city of *Macedonia*; (*Acts xvi. 23, 24.*) we were nevertheless animated with holy resolution, with liberty of spirit and of speech, and with undaunted courage, (*παρρησιασμενοι*) in humble dependence on our gracious God for protection and success, openly to publish the everlasting gospel to you; which,

N O T E.

* But even (*αλλα και*) that introduces the next verse, requires some such thought, as the paraphrase has added, at the close of this, relating to the apostle's hope of success among the *Thessalonians*, and his not being intimidated by the severe usage he had met with in other

parts of *Macedonia*. This preserves a good connection, which is not otherwise easily to be discerned; and therefore some suppose (without sufficient grounds, as appears to me) that the apostle there enters upon a new head of discourse.

which, not we, but God himself, is the author of, and we preach in his name with mighty zeal and fervour of spirit, as it were to a great agony, (*πολλὰ ἀγωνί*) in striving for your conversion, and against the furious opposition which the unbelieving *Jews* there also made against us. (*Acts* xvii. 5, &c.)

3 For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile;

3 For our address to you, whether in a way of exhortation to duty, or of consolation (*παράκλησις*) under sufferings for Christ's sake, was not by preaching any erroneous doctrines, like the false teachers, to seduce you, but the pure uncorrupted gospel; nor was it by teaching any principles that lead to licentiousness, but to all holiness in heart and life; nor was it by hypocritical pretences of piety and zeal, and love to you, for carrying on sinister views to worldly advantage, but in the sincerity of our hearts for the glory of God, and the good of your souls: So that there was no falsehood or impurity in the matter, nor insincerity or selfishness in the manner of our preaching.

4 But as we were allowed, of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as flattering men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

4 But as we were approved of God (*δοκιμασμεθα*) to be authorized and furnished for, and counted faithful to be intrusted with a dispensation of the gospel, (*1 Tim.* i. 11, 12. and *Tit.* i. 3.) as stewards of the mysteries of God; (*1 Cor.* iv. 1.) even so, according to the design of this honourable and important trust, we publish it wherever we come, without any alteration, but exactly as we received it from him; not in such a manner, as might be suited to the corrupt taste, notions, or fancies of men, to tickle their ears, gain their applause, and gratify their humours, lusts, and passions, by prophesying smooth things to them, or by concealing any necessary doctrine; (*Acts* xx. 21, 27.) but with all purity and sincerity, as may be best approved in the sight of the great and holy God, (*Gal.* i. 10.) who, we are sensible, searches and knows our hearts. (*Rev.* ii. 23.)

5 For neither at any times used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness;

5 For we never, in dealing with any sort of people, made use of fawning speeches to ingratiate ourselves with them, or flatter them with compliments, or with vain hopes of salvation in a course of sin, impenitence, and unbelief, or upon the foot of their own strength and righteousness, as ye yourselves can testify from all that ye have seen, or heard of our conduct, and manner of preaching; nor did we ever put on a cloak, or false pretence of religion, to cover, and set a gloss upon secret designs of making an advantage of you, like those false teachers, who, through *covetousness, with feigned words, make a merchandise* of their hearers; (*2 Pet.* ii. 3.) no, we can solemnly appeal to the heart-searching God for the truth of this.

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travel: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any

6 Nor were we ever ambitious of vain-glory, or of seeking the honour that comes from man only, after the example of those that tread in the steps of the scribes and Pharisees: (*John* v. 44. and xii. 43.) We never contrived, intended, or endeavoured to be admired, caressed, and applauded, while we were either among you, or any other people that we have ministered to*; no, nor did we assume a high tone of authority, nor seek after the honour of a maintenance at your expence, lest some should have thought it a burdensome tax upon them, though we might have insisted upon it, as the apostles of Christ, and servants sent forth by him, who said, *The labourer is worthy of his hire.* (*Luke* x. 7. see also 2 *Cor.* chap. ix. and the notes there.)

7 But, on the contrary, we behaved with all humility of mind, modesty, meekness, and gentleness among you, and with such self-denial, as might best show our parental care and concern for your spiritual benefit; even as a tenderly affectionate nursing mother suckles her beloved infants, nourishes them in her bosom, bears with their weakness and frowardness, and does all she can for their ease, help, and comfort.

8 We in like manner, being affectionately desirous of your edification and salvation, took great pleasure, not only in communicating unto you the gospel of the grace of God, and distributing suitable portions of it in due season to you, as to *new-born babes, who desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye might grow thereby*; (1 *Pet.* ii. 2.) but also in drawing out our own souls with compassion towards you, (*Isa.* lviii. 10.) in abundant labours, even to the exhausting of our strength and spirits, and cheerfully hazarding our lives, which we were ready to lay down for your sakes; because ye were exceeding dear to us, who have your spiritual and eternal concerns entirely at heart.

9 In proof of this, I need only remind you, my beloved brethren, who cannot have forgot how I, and my companions, laid ourselves out in the most fatiguing and painful services, while we were among you: For ye very well know, that we not only spent our strength in ministerial labours; but, when we were

N O T E.

* As *maintenance* is a part of the honour that is to be paid to ministering servants, (see the note on 1 *Tim.* v. 17, 18.) it seems to me, though the word here used be different, to be included also in the *glory*, which the apostle did not

seek of the *Thessalonians*, or other churches: For his adding, with reference hereunto, *when we might have been burdensome*, plainly leads our thoughts to his having waved the right of maintenance, which he might have claimed.

any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

were not employed in them, we worked early and late at our secular callings to get our own livelihood, being unwilling to take contributions from any of you for a maintenance, that we might not seem burdensome; but might preach the gospel of the grace of God at free cost, and thereby cut off all occasions from our adversaries, who would fain reproach us, as though we wanted to make a gain of you. (See the note on 1 Cor. ix. 1.)

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

10 We can appeal to your own consciences to witness for us, as far as ye have been capable of observing our deportment; and, which is still greater, and more abundantly to our satisfaction, we can solemnly appeal to the all-seeing and heart-searching God, who knows our principles, motives, and ends, as well as our external acts, that we exercised ourselves in a conscientious discharge of all the duties of religion toward God, and of righteousness toward men; and in such a sober, humble, benevolent, and inoffensive manner, in the whole of our conversation, as might best recommend the good ways of the Lord among you, that were brought to the faith of Christ by means of our ministry.

11 As you know, how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you, (as a father doth his children)

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

11, 12 We not only were careful to set you a good example, by our own regular behaviour among you; but, as ye likewise well know, we counselled, entreated, and excited every one of you, by all proper arguments, to practise the like Christian-duties that are incumbent upon you; and did all that in us lay to encourage you thereunto, and to comfort you under all your tribulations; and we with the greatest earnestness testified to you, (*μαρτυρουμεις*) in the name of the Lord Jesus, both publicly and privately, (*Acts* xx. 20.) with all the authority and affection of a father to his children, that ye ought to live in such a becoming manner as is suitable to the holy nature and will of God, and to his high and special favour toward you, whom, as appears in its fruits, he effectually called by the gospel, to partake of all the blessings and honours of his kingdom of grace in this world, and of his kingdom of glory in the world to come.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God,

13 And, in reflection on what God has done by us among you, we are exceeding thankful to him, blessing and praising his holy name in our daily addresses to him; because, when we were sent to preach the gospel at *Thessalonica*, ye not only gave us the hearing, which others of that city refused, (*Acts* xvii. 5.) but, upon hearing our message, your hearts, like *Lydia's*, (*Acts* xvi. 14.) were opened to attend to it, and embrace it with reverence, faith, love, and

obedience;

God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

obedience; and so ye believed and affectionately entertained it, not as a human scheme, or upon the foot of human authority; but as a revelation from God, (which it really is) and upon the foot of his authority, as a doctrine, which, not we, but God himself, in his infinite wisdom and grace, is the contriver and author of, and commissioned us to preach; and which, through his special blessing, works so powerfully and efficaciously with internal energy, as to produce a happy and holy change in your sentiments, principles and views, hearts and lives, who by faith received it, and who have thereby the best, the most satisfying and advantageous demonstration to your own consciences, that the gospel itself, together with its wonderful influence upon you, is, and could not but be, entirely of God.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

14 The powerful and blessed effects of this gospel upon you, my dear brethren in Christ, are evident, as has been hinted, (*chap. i. 6.*) in your so readily receiving it, though attended with so much outward affliction: For, from the time of your embracing it with faith and love, ye became imitators, not only of us, the servants of our Lord, but also of the churches, that are gathered in his name, according to his appointment, for religious worship in Judea; and that particularly in their courage and patience under the tribulations which they endure for his sake: For, at the instigation of furious zealots at *Thessalonica*, (*Acts xvii. 5, 6.*) ye yourselves also have been insulted and abused; and, with heroic Christian firmness of mind, have calmly submitted to the same sort of persecutions from people of your own country, as those churches, for the same cause, have cheerfully undergone the cruel usage they met with from the Jews in their parts.

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

15 Who, in the madness of their rage, embred their wicked hands (*Acts ii. 23.*) in the blood of the Lord of glory, the Saviour of his people from their sins; and therein shewed themselves to be in spirit and temper, as well as by descent, the children of those that dealt in the like unnatural and rebellious manner with the ancient prophets, which God had raised up among them: (*Matth. xxiii. 31, 37.*) And they have carried on this violent persecution with the utmost severity against us, the apostles and servants of Christ, and professors of his name, and particularly against myself at *Thessalonica*, and many other places. And though they pretend to be God's peculiar favourites, and that in killing us, as they did *Stephen* and *Jamer*, (*Acts vii. 59, 60. and xii. 2.*) they are doing him good service, (*John xvi. 2.*) they

are

are really so far from being accepted of him, or approving themselves to him, that they act directly contrary to his merciful and holy nature and will, law and gospel; and are the worst of enemies, not only to us, but to the common happiness of all mankind, and particularly of the *Gentiles*, whom they treat with the utmost indignation, contempt, and scorn;

16 Forbidding us to speak to the *Gentiles*, that they might be saved, to fill up their sins all way: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

16 Doing what in them lies to hinder us, (*καλονταν ημας*) the ministers of Christ, from preaching the gospel to the *Gentiles*, as being envious at their conversion, in order to their eternal salvation; they still persisting, by divine permission, in their obstinate prejudices and opposition to the Messiah and his servants, wherever they come, to fill up the measure of their own and their fathers iniquities, (*Matth. xxiii. 32.*) till God will bear with them no longer, as will soon appear by the awful event: For righteous vengeance has begun to seize *, and is about to come upon them in the most dreadful executions, (*εις τελος*) to complete their ruin, and put an end to their church and state, without redress, till the fulness of the *Gentiles* be come in. (*Rom. xi. 25.*)

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

17 But we, dear brethren, were, solely against our will, forced away from you all on a sudden, for a short season, which will soon be over, like that of an hour, (*προς καιρον ωρας*) by reason of their outrage, who hunted after our blood; (*Acts xvii. 5, 10.*) so that we could no longer continue with safety in person among you; which went as near our hearts as it could to the heart of the tenderest dying parents, whether nursing mothers, or affectionate fathers, (*ver. 7, 11.*) to be torn away from their weak, helpless, and exposed orphans, (*απορφανισθεντες*) that would dearly miss them: But our hearts are still as much as ever with you; and considering how we were snatched away from you unawares, and what need ye have of our further counsel, admonitions, cautions, and encouragements, to animate and fortify you against the dangers that surround you, we have been the more exceedingly diligent, and have tried all possible means, with the most affectionate desire, and earnest solicitude of soul, to get an opportunity of coming to you again, and conversing with you face to face.

18 For

N O T E.

* The verb, (*ερχασαι*) being the first *aorist*, is of indeterminate signification, and may, I think, be here more properly rendered *is about to come*, than *is come*, upon them to the uttermost; be- cause, though the destruction of that people, and of their city and temple, were drawing on apace, it was not fully accomplished, till about twenty years afterwards.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again; but Satan hindered us.

18 * For we fain would have returned to you, and attempted it time after time, even I Paul especially; but Satan, that great adversary to Christ and his gospel, to us his ministering servants, and to your souls, cut out work for us in other places, as particularly at Berea and Athens, (Acts xvii. 13.—34.) by sowing the seeds of discord and heresy, and springing up a violent opposition to the truth, which rendered it necessary for us to make a stand against him and his instruments, for the vindication of the gospel, and establishment of the saints in these parts; and so he laid such obstacles in our way, to entangle and incumber us, as has hitherto prevented our design of coming to you: But ye may be well assured we are still as mindful of you, and as sincerely and affectionately desirous, as ever, to return to you, if the Lord permit.

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

19 For what is the chief matter of our hope with respect to the happy fruit of our ministry, to animate us to it? or what is our chief joy in it? or what the crown of our glorying, as the reward of our labours at the end of it? Are not ye in an eminent manner, my dearly beloved, whom, among other converts, we expect to see at the right hand of Christ, and to present as a chaste virgin to him, (2 Cor. xi. 2.) *at his second coming, when he who is our life shall appear, and ye, together with us, shall appear with him in glory? (Col. iii. 4. †)

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

20 For in reflection on what ye already are, through grace, and in prospect of what ye shall then further be, by means of our ministrations to you, ye certainly are at present the glory of our ministry, and the joy of our hearts; and we doubt not but we shall find you so to a still more exalted degree, at the day of Christ; when they that be wise shall shine, as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever. (Daniel xii. 3.)

RECollections.

What a joy of heart is it to the servants of the Lord Jesus, to be able to appeal to their hearers, and to God himself, that they have been courageous, upright, laborious, humble, tender, self-denying, unblamable, and disinterested, free from covetousness and vain-glory, in their ministrations and behaviour, even in the midst of persecutions and reproaches for the sake of Christ, as persons entrusted with the gospel,

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gospel, and seeking, in dispensing it, not to please men, but God; whom they consider as the searcher of their hearts! With what grateful reflections do they bless his holy and gracious name, when he crowns their labours with success! And how happy is it for the attendants on their ministry to know, by their own experience, that it has not been unprofitable to them; but that they have been enabled to receive it with reverence, faith, and love, merely upon the foot of its divine authority, and have felt its powerful operation in their own souls, to animate them unto all patience in suffering for Christ, after the example of the most celebrated churches, and unto all holy conversation and godliness, suitable to their privileges and obligations, as true believers, whom God has effectually called by the gospel, to inherit all the blessings and honours of his kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter! Alas! how desperately malignant against Christ, and his servants and disciples, is a spirit of persecution! It is a direct imitation of the great adversary the devil, and promotes his interest and designs, under his wicked influence; it fills up the measure of their iniquities, who persist in the practice of it; and ripens them for destruction, till wrath comes upon them to the uttermost. But with what parental tenderness do faithful pastors sympathize with their flocks in their tribulations! How gladly would they visit, assist, encourage, and comfort them under their trials, as opportunity offers! And with what flowing affection do they think of the dear seals of their ministry, as their glory and joy, and as those whom they trust the Lord Jesus Christ will publicly own, as the crown of their rejoicing, when he shall come to judge the world at the last day.

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The apostle gives still further proof of his great affection to them, in his having sent Timothy to establish and comfort them, 1,—5. In his rejoicing at the good tidings of their faith and love, 6,—9. And in his praying for an opportunity of returning to them, and for their perseverance and increase in grace, till the second coming of Christ, 10,—13.

TEXT.

Wherefore, when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

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SO great was the solicitude of my mind about you, as young converts in the perilous circumstances in which I was forced, all of a sudden, to leave you, that when, upon my arriving at *Athens*, (*Acts xvii. 15.*) and meeting with various disappointments of my scheme for returning to you, I grew more uneasy in my concern for you, than I well knew how any longer to bear, or conceal from you; (*μνηστίς στενορρέας*)* I rather chose to be left there alone, to struggle with the many difficulties I had to encounter, in disputes with the *Jews*, and with the *Epicurean* and *Stoic* philosophers, (*Acts xvii. 17, 18.*) than to remain uncertain

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2 And sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith;

3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

4 For verily when we were with you, we told you before, that we should suffer tribulation: even as it came to pass, and ye know.

certain about the state of your affairs, or neglect any thing that might contribute to your help.

2 And therefore, though I much needed the company and assistance of the dear *Timothy*, who was there, and might have been very useful to me, and is indeed my affectionate brother, and a faithful ministring servant after God's own heart, commissioned by his authority, and richly endowed with gifts and graces, to promote his cause and kingdom in the world, and is a laborious copartner with me in the work of preaching that blessed gospel of salvation, which has Christ for its author and principal subject; yet, for your sakes, I cheerfully parted with that excellent young evangelist, and dispatched him to you, that he might know how matters go with you; (*ver. 5.*) and that, supplying my place, he might labour to strengthen and confirm your faith in Christ, and in the great doctrines of the gospel, and (*παρηγοῦναι*) might exhort you to hold them fast, and help to revive a sweet sense in your souls of the glorious advantages and delights that will result from your faith, even in this world, and much more in the world to come.

3 That so none of you might be disheartened, or staggered, at the persecutions, which both yourselves and we, the ministers of Christ, have endured for his sake: And ye ought not to be discouraged or shaken in mind on this account; for as the worst, as well as the best, that is to be expected from your faithful adherence to Christ, has been set before you, ye cannot but know, that God, in his eternal, infinitely wise, and holy counsels, has appointed us, the servants and disciples of Jesus, to sufferings for his sake, as well as to be partakers of his glory. (*1 Pet. ii. 12, 13.*)

4 For even when I and my fellow-labourers were present with you *, we warned you before-hand to prepare for the worst, that as all that *will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*; (*2 Tim. iii. 12. Acts iv. 14, 22.*) so we should certainly have our share in the common lot; and accordingly, as ye may well remember, it soon afterward proved in the event; ye yourselves having experienced it, and been eye-witnesses of the storm that fell upon us at *Thessalonica*. (*Acts xvi. 5, &c.*)

N O T E.

* By this time both *Silas* and *Timothy* were come to the apostle at *Corinth*, as appears from *Acts xviii. 1. 5.* compared with the inscription of this epistle; and he here refers to what had past at

Thessalonica, when they were there with him, and so may be understood to include them with himself in what he speaks in the plural number in this, and mostly at least, in some following verses.

5 When

3 For
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VOL.

3 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

5 When therefore, as was said before, (*ver.* 1, 2.) I could no longer bear the anxiety of my mind concerning you, on account of the difficult and trying circumstances in which I was forced to leave you, I sent the beloved and faithful *Timothy* to see how it fares with your faith; having a *godly jealousy over you*, (*2 Cor.* xi. 2.) lest by the violence of persecutions, and subtle intrigues of false teachers, and by inward suggestions, or any other means, that malicious, artful, and busy adversary, the devil, might have thrown temptations in your way, to turn you back from Christ and the gospel; and so all the hopeful pains, we had taken for your conversion, should have proved to be ineffectual, and the promising appearances should have come to nothing, at least as to some of you, directly contrary to our strong persuasion in the judgment of charity, founded upon visible effects, (*chap.* i. 4, 5. see the note there) that ye really were the beloved and chosen of God to eternal salvation.

6 But now when *Timotheus* came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you;

6 But now my former good hopes concerning you are abundantly confirmed. When our dear brother *Timothy* lately returned from you to us at *Corinth*, (*Acts* xviii. 5. see the note there) he gave us the most agreeable and satisfactory account, that, notwithstanding all your trials and dangers, ye continue steadfast in the faith of the gospel, and, as a proof of its sincerity, in your love to Christ, and to his ordinances and ways, to one another, and to all his faithful servants; and particularly that ye retain an affectionate remembrance of us in your daily prayers, and a lively sense of the excellent doctrines we preached, and are often speaking of our persons and ministry with esteem and honour; and that, in reflection on the benefit ye received by our former labours among you, ye are earnestly desirous of seeing us again, as I have assured you, (*chap.* ii. 17.) we also are to see and be further assistant to you.

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

7 Having therefore, beloved brethren, received these good tidings of your steady perseverance in the faith of Christ, and of its genuine fruits, our rejoicing on your account entirely removed all the painful anxiety about you, that before distressed our minds; (*ver.* 5.) and was a reviving cordial to us under all the troubles that we have been exposed to here for the gospel's sake, (*Acts* xviii. 1.—18.)

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

8 For whatsoever were our difficulties here, and our dejections and solicitude concerning you before, which were like death to us, we are now alive and comfortable in our own souls, and go on cheerfully in our work; since (*scilicet*) ye continue steadfast in your adherence to the Lord Jesus, and *bold fast the profession*

session of your faith without wavering ; (Heb. x. 25.) we having no greater joy than to find that ye, our spiritual children, walk in the truth. (3 John ver. 3, 4.)

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God ;

9 For considering the happy state of your affairs, How can we ever be thankful enough, in fresh returns of gratitude and praise to our God, for his grace bestowed upon you, and for giving us hearts to rejoice so exceedingly in it : This we sincerely do, as in his sight and presence, who knows that we are greatly affected in every reflection upon it, and whenever we appear before him in our solemn devotions.

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith ?

10 So near do ye lie to our hearts, that in our stated addresses to God every evening and morning, (see the note on 2 Tim. i. 3.) and at all other seasons of approaching him, our prayers are carried out to an extraordinary degree of importunity and fervour, (*πρὸς ἐκτελέωσιν*) that, if it be his blessed will, we might have an opportunity of making you a visit once again ; and of being farther instrumental, in his hand, for giving you a complete view of the doctrines of faith, which we could not do while we were with you, by reason of our being driven away from you before we were aware ; (*Acts xvii. 10.*) and for establishing, settling, and further building you up in your most holy faith, and helping you against all the defects, which, as to its extent, clearness, and lively exercise, still attend that, and every other grace ; as there will be something of this kind of defect, in both these considerations of it, not only in young, though growing converts, but even in the most advanced Christians upon earth.

11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

11 Now, in order to your help herein, we still continue to be importunate in our prayers, that God himself, whose kingdom rules over all, and who is your and our covenant God and Father ; and that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, in his office-capacity, *is head over all things to the church*, (Ephes. i. 22.) would please to order, by an overruling providence, that our way may be made plain, and our course may be soon directed, as it were in a straight line to you, (*κατευθύναι*) free from all the difficulties and avocations, that have hitherto obstructed it.

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one towards another, and towards all men, even as we do towards you :

12 And as we know that all the successes of our best designs and endeavours depend entirely on the divine blessing, our heart's desire and prayer is, that, whether we be permitted to come to you, or not, the Lord Jesus, who is a head of influence, as well as of government, would enable you by his Spirit still more and more to grow, and increase to an overflowing

flowing in your affectionate Christian love *, and in its abounding fruits and effects, by all manner of means, one towards another, as members of the same church, and of the body of Christ, and as children of the same heavenly Father; and towards all the saints in general, of what denomination soever they be; and even in all good-will towards all men, of every character, with as much sincerity and abounding therein, as our affection does toward you.

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

13 To the end that, in this way and manner, he may strengthen, settle, and confirm your whole souls in every grace, and in the doctrine of the gospel; and may preserve you blameless in every good word and work, and in all holy conversation, to such a degree, as is at present well pleasing in the eyes of the infinitely pure and all-seeing God, even our reconciled God and Father, and as shall continue until, and issue in your being *presented holy, and unblameable, and unreprouceable in his sight*, (Col. i. 22.) at the second appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who will come to judge the world, with a bright retinue of all his glorified saints and holy angels, at the last day. (*Chap. iv. 16, 17. 2 Thes. i. 7, 10. and Jude, ver. 14.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What an amiable example to gospel-ministers has the great apostle set in his warm affection to, and solicitous concern for the church! They, like him, ought to demonstrate their love to, and use all means for the establishment and comfort of the souls that are under their watch and care; and for taking off discouragements that might arise from the hardships for the sake of the gospel, which God, in his wise and holy counsels and providence, has allotted to them, and given them reason to expect. And, ah! what a touching and painful grief of heart is it to tender and faithful pastors to be afraid, lest, through the subtilty and violence of Satan and his emissaries, professors, of whom they have hoped well, should miscarry, and all the labour that had been spent upon them should come to nothing! But O! the joy that springs up in their souls, and adds a relish to life itself, when they find that their dearly beloved charge continue stedfast in the faith, and that their faith works by love to Christ and one another, and to his ministering servants, especially to such of them as have been instruments of their conversion; and that it spreads with a benevolent temper towards all mankind, as such! How does their knowledge of this engage their thankfulness to God, and animate them to go on with cheerfulness and joy in all their services and sufferings; and to contribute, what in them lies, for the further establishment of their flocks in faith and love, and for perfecting all which concerns them, that they may be unblameable in holiness in the sight of God, until, and in the day of Christ! For this they have a longing desire to see them, and be further helpful to them; for this they labour, whether present or absent, looking up to God to direct their way; and for this they continually pray to the God of all grace, as their God and Father in Christ, and to the

P 2 N O T E.

* The apostle's praying that *the Lord would make them to increase and abound in love one towards another, and his beseeching them to increase more and more* therein, chap. iv. 10. suppose that they did already live in the practice of it; and he there expressly observes, to their commendation, that they *did it towards all the brethren, which were in all Macedonia*.

the Lord Jesus, as their great and only Head and Mediator, who will certainly appear a second time to the salvation of all the saints. And may it be our chief concern, and happy lot, to be found among them whom he will gather together to be glorified with him at the last day :

C H A P. IV.

The apostle exhorts the Thessalonians to chastity and holiness in their lives, 1,—8. To brotherly love, a peaceable behaviour, and diligence in their secular callings, 9,—12. And to moderate their grief for the death of godly relations and friends, in consideration of the glorious resurrection of their bodies at Christ's second coming; from which time forwards all the saints, that may then be dead, or living upon the earth, shall be ever with the Lord, 13,—18.

TEXT.

FURTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have receiv'd of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

PARAPHRASE.

IN order to your being established in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all the saints, (*chap. iii. 13.*) it remains then, (*το λοιπον*) my dearly beloved brethren, that we with all tenderness and affection entreat you, and with all authority in the name, for the sake, and in the stead of our Lord and Saviour, injoin and excite you, that, as ye have had directions and commands from us, under the inspiration of his Spirit, relating to the manner in which ye ought to order the whole course of your religious and moral conversation, in all well-pleasingness to God, through Christ; and that, as ye have, generally speaking, attended to our exhortations, and put them into practice hitherto; so ye would labour, by divine grace, to improve and excel therein every day yet more and more.

2 For ye well know, and cannot but remember, what holy precepts we delivered to you, when we were with you, as the rule of your behaviour in all things; and with what solemn and evangelical arguments we enforced, and bound them upon your consciences, by the immediate authority of the exalted Lord and Saviour of his body, the church.

3 For, as ye have often heard from us, who have preached moral duties, as well as, and upon the foundation of evangelical doctrines, this is the ordaining, approving, and preceptive will of God, yea, is what he intended in bestowing his grace upon you, namely, that, encouraged by the promises of his covenant, ye cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in his fear: (*2 Cor. vii. 1.*) And particularly, that ye carefully avoid, and keep at the remotest distance from simple fornication,

and

and all manner of uncleanness, (see the note on 1 Cor. v. 1.) in thought, word, and deed, and from every thing that tends towards, or might be an enticement to that sin, which the *Gentile*-converts especially among you may have been most guilty of, in the days of their unregeneracy, and may be still too much in danger of being drawn into, through the temptations that surround them from their old acquaintance.

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

4 In opposition thereunto, it is plainly the will of God, that all and every one of you, whether *Jewish* or *Gentile*-believers, should know by the gospel, and our ministry of it, his indispensable obligation to, and in what manner, and by what motives, means, and assistances from above, he may occupy and make use of his body *, which is the receptacle of the soul, with temperance, chastity, and purity, and with honour to God, to human nature; to the Christian character, and to the relation which the bodies of the saints bear to the Holy Ghost, as his temple. (See 1 Cor. vi. 18, 19, 20.)

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the *Gentiles* which know not God:

5 The Christian therefore is by no means to indulge, or give way to any gratification of defiling passions, appetites, and inclinations, that work with sensual desire after unlawful embraces of any kind; such as are practised by the idolatrous heathens, that are strangers to the knowledge of the only living and true God, and are notoriously infamous for the vilest abominations. (*Rom.* i. 24.—28.)

6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you, and testified.

6 We furthermore beseech and exhort you, in the name of Christ, that none of you ever dare, by any means, to act a dishonest part of what nature soever, much less to transgress in this matter, so as, through vicious inclinations, to break in upon the matrimonial bond, by going into such a criminal conversation with the wife of any one that may be called a brother † in a religious sense, or even as a member of civil society, and partaker of human nature, as would be an injury to him, and a violation of her chastity: For *whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*, (*Heb.* xiii. 4.) so as to execute dreadful vengeance, in a way of just

NOTES.

* *His vessel* may be supposed to signify his wife, who is called the *weaker vessel*; (1 Pet. iii. 7.) but it seems more agreeable to the manner of the apostle's arguing here against simple fornication, to understand it of his *own body*, which is spoken of as *a vessel*, 1 Sam. xxi. 5. and 2 Cor. ii. 6.

† It is, I think, justly observed by some, that *going beyond and defrauding*

his brother relates not, chiefly at least, to what we call *moral honesty*, but to violating the right and property that a man has in his wife. by invading his peculiar claim to her: This makes it all of a piece with the foregoing and following context; and, perhaps, here may be some reference to the unnatural sin between man and man, which was practised among the *Gentiles*, *Rom.* i. 26, 27.

just retribution, upon all persons that allow themselves in such wicked practices; as we likewise formerly in our ministrations to, and converses with you, have seriously forewarned you of it, and bore witness against this sin, as abominable in his sight.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

7 For the infinitely holy God, in calling us by his gospel and his grace to the knowledge and fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord, was so far from designing to allow us to live in any iniquity, which is the defilement of our nature, or in any sort of uncleanness; that, on the contrary, he has thereby laid us under the highest obligations, and enforced them by additional motives, to be chaste and holy, in all manner of conversation, and without blame, before him in love.

8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

8 Whosoever therefore he be, that rejects these admonitions and commands, or treats them with neglect and contempt, does not therein put a slight upon the authority of men, as not to be regarded; but in reality despises, and rejects the authority of the great God himself, as delivering them by us, his inspired servants; even of that God, who hath also given to us his Holy Spirit, to speak in and by us; and so has given a divine sanction to what we say from him; * yea, who hath given his enlightning and sanctifying Spirit to all of us, who are true believers, to direct and engage a ready compliance with every duty that he enjoins upon us.

9 But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

9 But as to the great duty of love, which stands in direct opposition to the fore-mentioned vices, and which ye in a special manner owe to one another, as brethren in the faith, hope, holiness, and blessings of the gospel, I need not inculcate *this* upon you, as though ye were backward to it: For ye yourselves, as Christians, have such a lively sense of your obligation to it, and such strong dispositions for it, by the teachings of God's word and Spirit, as to know, from sweet experience, what this cordial affection toward fellow-Christians means, as I have already supposed in my prayers, that ye *may increase and abound in it.* (See the note on chap. iii. 12.)

10 And indeed ye do it towards all the brethren, which are in all Macedonia, but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase

10 And I am well satisfied that, by the grace of God, ye are inclined and enabled to practise this amiable and important duty, as eminently appears in your exemplary temper and behaviour, not only toward the members of your own church, but even to all your Christian brethren in the faith and fellowship of

NOTE

* *Who hath given to us his Holy Spirit, unto uncleanness, but unto holiness; Spirit,* may refer either to the *apostles*, (ver. 7.) accordingly some ancient copies by whom God delivered these precepts, read *unto you*.
or to *believers*, whom he has called not

increase more and more.

of the gospel, all around you, in the various churches that are planted throughout the province of *Macedonia*; so that nothing remains for me to do on this head, but only to excite and encourage you, my dear brethren, to persevere and excel yet more and more in your fervour therein, and in every suitable demonstration of it, as there may be still further occasions for its exercise, and *that* with still wider extent, in all other places, and particularly toward your *Jewish* brethren, the poor saints at *Jerusalem*. (2 Cor. viii. 1,—4. See the notes there.)

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, (as we commanded you.)

11 And to this I would add my earnest entreaties, that ye all would studiously endeavour to show a holy ambition, and eager concern (*φιλοτιμωσθαι*) to behave with a meek and peaceable temper, and not officiously and needlessly intrude into other people's affairs, and create disturbances, either in private families, or the neighbourhood, or in the church or state; and that ye would attend to the duties of your own respective stations, and personal concerns, and labour diligently in the business of your secular calling*, that, as occasions require, your own hands may be industriously employed in providing for yourselves and families, and for such good things of this life as may enable you to give to them that need your assistance, (*Eph.* iv. 28.) according to the orders, which we, the apostles and ministers of Christ, gave you to that purpose, when we were with you; which we also recommended by our own example. (See 2 *Thes.* iii. 7, 10.)

12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

12 My great design in pressing diligence in your honest callings is, that ye may *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*, (*Titus* ii. 10.) and may live (*εὐσχημονως*) in such an upright, faithful, decent, and becoming manner, towards all men, as shall take off prejudices from the minds of those that are out of the pale of the church, and even of enemies to Christianity, who would gladly catch at any opportunity of reproaching it, as if it made its converts an idle and worthless sort of people, rather a burden and scandal, than a benefit and honour to the community;

N O T E.

* To work with their own hands was necessary for those among them whose circumstances called for it, and had a particular respect to the lower ranks of people, who in that trading city were to be employed in manufactures; but it may be carried into a general rule for diligence in discharging the duties of every station, in such a way as is suitable to it; since idleness is a

detestable vice, as it is a dishonourable waste of our time and talents, renders us useless in the world, exposes to many temptations, and defeats every valuable end of living; and the slothful is called a wicked and unprofitable servant, that shall be cast into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (*Matth.* xxv. 26, 30.)

community; and that, instead of being beholden to the charity of others, ye may have a sufficiency of all needful things to supply your own wants.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

13 But to fortify and comfort you, my dear brethren, against the invidious and severe censures of *Jewish* zealots, as though no uncircumcised *Gentile* can be admitted to the kingdom of heaven*; and to caution you against such excessive lamentations over the dead, as are used among the *heathens*, and as God has forbidden to his children, (*Deut.* iv. 1.) I am much concerned that ye should know, and be well satisfied about, the happiness of those of your pious relations and acquaintance in another world, who died in the faith of Christ, and whose bodies are gone to rest in the grave, as persons fallen asleep to awake again, (see the note on *1 Cor.* xi. 30.) that ye may not grieve and mourn over the loss of them, as your heathen neighbours do over their departed friends, concerning whom they have no hope of their ever rising again to eternal life: But there is no room for your entertaining such a melancholy thought, with respect to deceased believers in Christ:

14 For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

14 For if we are really and firmly persuaded, upon clear evidence, as all true Christians are, that the only Saviour of them that believe in him, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, actually died to expiate their sins, and *rose again for their justification*, and as *the first-fruits of them that sleep in him*; (*Rom.* iv. 25. and *1 Cor.* xv. 20.) we must needs also be fully satisfied upon this ground, that God, (*dis us Invs*) through the power of the death, and the virtue of the resurrection of Jesus, will quicken them, that sleep in union with him, (*ver.* 16.) to an immortal and glorious life; and will gather them together with him, as members with their head, at his second coming, *when he who is their life shall appear*, and *they shall appear with him in glory*. (*Col.* iii. 4.)

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the

15 For, to lead you into something still further, that ye as yet are entirely unacquainted with; we, his inspired servants, declare unto you, not of our own head, but by the infallible word of the Lord Jesus, which he has communicated to us by immediate revelation,

N O T E.

* In those days there were *Jewish* zealots that pretended to exclude all from future happiness that were not of their own nation, or incorporated with them by being circumcised; and the idolatrous heathens went into excessive howlings and mournings over their dead,

whom they looked upon as lost for ever, and especially with respect to *the body*, the resurrection of which none of them had any notion of; and as the apostle might have his eye upon both these cases, to guard against them, they are referred to in the paraphrase.

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revelation, with authority to publish it to others*, that, considering the whole church, as one collective body, in the present, and all succeeding generations, to the end of the world; whoever they be of us that are to be reckoned to this body, as members of it, and shall be living and left in the church militant here upon earth, until the time of Christ's coming again in all his glory, we shall not anticipate, much less prevent, the resurrection of the bodies of those saints that will then be sleeping in their graves.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

16 For, at that important day, the Lord Jesus himself will, in his human nature, as visibly descend from heaven, in a cloud of glory, like the ancient *Shechina*, as, after his resurrection, he ascended up to heaven with a retinue of angels surrounding him; (*Acts* i. 9, 11. see the paraphrase there) and he will do this with an awful summons, (*ἐν κλελευσματι*) which shall be uttered with great solemnity, as with a loud voice of the chief of all the angels, the rest attending him, (*Mat.* xxv. 31.) and with the exceeding louder voice of the great God our Saviour, Christ himself, as though given forth with the sound of a trumpet, like that which was heard on Mount *Sinai* at the publication of the law †, and like what was often used for gathering solemn assemblies together; (*Exod.* xix. 16. *Jer.* iv. 5. and *Joel* ii. 15.) and then

N O T E S.

* To suppose that the apostle thought, and suggested, as if any of the then present age would live upon earth, till the time of Christ's second coming to judgment, is to overthrow all dependence upon his authority and inspiration, when he tells us that what he here said was by the word of the Lord; and it is evident that as he often spake of his own death, so he expected a resurrection to eternal life, together with the believers of that generation, *2 Cor.* iv. 14. and v. 1.—4. and *Phil.* iii. 10, 11.: And in his 2d epistle to the *Thessalonians*, chap. ii. 1.—8. he sets himself to confute the notion of those that suggested, through a mistake of his meaning in what he here had said, as if the second coming of Christ were then at hand; and he reminds them of what he had told them to the contrary, when he was with them, which was before he wrote either of his epistles to them. But as believers of all ages and nations make up but one collective body, church, or household of faith, all that belong to that body may, with propriety enough, speak of themselves, as parts of it in the first person plural, relating to the future,

as well as present time. In this manner the apostle speaks on this very subject, saying, *Behold, I shew you a mystery, we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed; the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed:* (*1 Cor.* xv. 51, 52. see the note there.) And in common language among ourselves, when we speak of a nation, or any company of which we are a part, we often say we shall be very happy, or miserable, whenever such and such events come to pass, whether we may ever live to see them or not.

† As the trumpet of God seems most immediately to allude to the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, when the Lord or *Yehozab* (which I take, with several learned divines, to mean the Son of God) delivered the law at mount *Sinai*; (see the note on *Acts* vii. 38.) so the trumpet of God, which is not to be understood in a literal sense, may possibly signify the voice of Christ, which he says all that are in their graves shall hear, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. (*John* v. 28, 29.)

then the bodies of those that died in a state of federal and vital union with Christ, shall be quickened to a glorious immortality, not only before the wicked shall be raised, but even before the saints, that may then be alive on earth, shall be brought together with him. (ver. 14.)

17 Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

17 Then, after the resurrection of departed believers to eternal life, those of us that are of this holy community, and belong to Christ's mystical body, or his true church, and may be found living, and dwelling with that part of it, which shall continue upon earth till that day, shall undergo a refining change, (1 Cor. xv. 31.) and be raised up by his almighty power to ascend, as one body with our fellow-members, that shall awake from their *sleep in the dust of the earth, to everlasting life*; (Dan. xii. 2.) and we with them shall be carried up by a divine rapture in the clouds of glory, in which he will then appear, that all of us together may have a happy meeting with our dear Lord in the regions of the air, never to part again*: And being then owned and acquitted by him, and adjudged, as the blessed of his Father, to *inherit the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world*, (Mat. xxv. 34.) we shall thenceforward be, in soul and body to all eternity, with the Lord Jesus himself, to abide in his immediate presence, *where he is, to behold his glory*. (John xvii. 24.)

18 Wherefore, comfort one another with these words.

18 Let these considerations therefore, taken from the word of the Lord, comfort your hearts, with respect to the happy condition of your departed Christian-friends, and with respect to the joyful meeting which ye shall have with them in the presence of Christ at his coming; and let these things be the daily subject of your discourse one with another, for your mutual comfort, and the excitation of each other (*παρκαλιεῖς ἀλλήλους*) to a composed, resigned, and cheerful frame of spirit, under all your present trials, and particularly under the loss of such as sleep in Jesus, how near and dear soever they were to you; and under every prospect of your own approaching dissolution.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How concerned should Christians be to increase and abound every day yet more and more, in all holiness of heart and life, according to the will of God, and as may

NOTE.

* It is very probable that Christ's seat of judgment will be *in the air*; since he is so often spoken of as appearing *in the clouds*, and *in the clouds of heaven*, and no place of this earth can scarce be thought capacious enough for the innu-

merable multitude of the righteous and the wicked, from the beginning to the end of the world, to appear before his throne; and the wicked cannot be supposed to be summoned before it in hea-

may be most pleasing in his sight! And how watchful ought they to be against, and abhorrent of all sensuality, and impurity of every kind, as knowing that God hath called them; not to uncleanness, but unto holiness, and will execute righteous vengeance upon all the workers of iniquity! Whoever neglects, or despises the commandments which his servants deliver by the authority of the Lord Jesus, according to his inspired word, throws contempt, not upon man only, but upon God himself. How amiable is that brotherly love, which true believers are taught of God by his word and Spirit to cherish, and exercise one towards another, together with such a peaceable and quiet temper, as disposes and influences them, not to intrude into affairs that do not belong to them, but to be diligent in attending to the duties of their own stations, that they may get an honourable livelihood, and support the credit of religion among its enemies, and prevent occasions of their reproaching it, as though it encouraged idleness!—As our Christian friends, and we ourselves, must die, either in the ordinary course of nature, or by a violent death, how comfortable is it, and relieving to our sorrows, when any of them are taken from us, to be well satisfied that they sleep in Jesus, and shall rise again to eternal life; and that we shall meet them again, when God will bring them and us to be glorified with him! O reviving thought! that as soon as the dead in Christ shall be raised from their graves, the rest of the saints, that shall be living upon earth at his second glorious coming, shall, by the wonderful operation of divine power, pass under a refining change of their mortal bodies into an immortal frame; shall be caught up, together with risen saints, to meet their Lord in the illustrious cloud, where he will appear in the air; and from thenceforth, all together, as one body, shall, in their whole persons, dwell with him, in his immediate blissful presence for ever!

C H A P. V.

The apostle exhorts the Thessalonians to be always ready for the coming of Christ to judgment, which will be with suddenness and surprise, like a thief in the night, 1,—11. Directs them to several particular duties in their relative and personal capacities, 12,—22. And concludes his epistle with prayer, salutations, and a benediction, 23,—28.

TEXT.

BUT of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

PARAPHRASE.

BUT, as to the precise time that God has set, and the fittest of all opportunities (*καιρος*) that he designs to take, for Christ's appearing to execute the judgment of the great day, which will be the consummation of your happiness, (*chap. iv. 13,—18.*) ye, my dear brethren in the faith of the gospel, have no occasion, nor would it be to any good purpose, for me to gratify a vain curiosity, by attempting to write to you about a point, that is entirely reserved, as an absolute secret, in the counsels of the divine mind; nor would it be of any advantage to you, were I capable of acquainting you with it.

2 For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

2 For, from what our blessed Lord himself and his apostles have taught, ye yourselves have been already led (*αποσους*) into an accurate knowledge of all that is necessary and useful, relating to his final appearance, that ye may be constantly on your watch, and in a proper readiness for it: Ye must needs be well

satisfied in your own minds, that the glorious manifestation of Christ, at his coming to judge the whole world, is unalterably fixed in the purpose of God, and foretold in his word, and shall certainly be brought to pass, according thereunto, in its proper season; but that the particular day, or appointed time for it, is as uncertain, with respect to our knowledge of it, and will come as unexpectedly, on a sudden, to all of us, and with as much terror and surprise to the wicked and ungodly, that are unprepared for it *, as a thief's breaking into a house at midnight can be to the master of it, while he and all his family are asleep, and have no apprehensions of it, or concern about it, to keep them on their watch, and guard against it. (*Mat. xxiv. 42, 43. and Rev. iii. 3.*)

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

3 For when secure sinners shall flatter themselves, and when, according to their own fond desires, false teachers shall *prophecy unto them smooth things, and deceits, saying Peace, peace, when there is no peace;* (*Isa. xxx. 10. and Jer. vi. 14.*) at that very time utter destruction of soul and body shall rush in upon them at unawares; and *that* as certainly and suddenly as the exquisite travailing pains of a woman with child come upon her, when, though she continually carries the cause of them in her own body, she least of all expects them, as being engaged in other affairs, in business or diversions, or in eating, drinking, or sleeping: And as the sooner or later must inevitably undergo the agonizing pains of labour †; so, whenever this terrible day of the Lord shall come, none of those that are thoughtless about, and unprepared for it, shall by any means be able to fly from, (*1 Pet. iv. 17.*) or avoid the insupportable miseries that their own unbelief, and other sins, will bring upon them. (*2 Thes. i. 9.*) There shall then be no place, *where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves* from the fierceness of his righteous indignation. (*Job xxxiv. 22.*)

4 But ye, brethren,

4 But as for you, my dear Christian-brethren, ye may

N O T E S.

* In this and the following verses, two elegant and very apposite comparisons are joined together (says Mr. Blackwall in his Sacred Classics, Vol. I. pag. 109.) the more forcibly and fully to represent the suddenness of our Saviour's coming to judgment; and the verbs are in the present time, to make the description more affecting and awful.

† The pains of a woman in travail, which are some of the sharpest agonies of nature, are frequently spoken of as emblems of great distress, as in *Psal. xlviii. 6.*

Jer. vi. 24. and xiii. 21. and xxii. 23. and l. 43. It is therefore with great propriety that the apostle represents the exquisite torments of the wicked at the great day by those pains, with regard to the extreme anguish, as well as the unexpected suddenness of them: And it may carry a further intimation that, as a woman's hour of sorrow is the fruit of her being with child; so the cause of the sinner's miseries lies in himself, whose own iniquities procure them.

thren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

may think of this day with joy, and not with grief or distressing fears; as ye are not, like others, under the power of spiritual darkness, to make you sleep secure in sin, faithless and unconcerned about the coming of Christ, and unready to meet him in that awful day, which, though it may come as much unexpected and unawares to you, as to them, with regard to the particular time of it; yet it shall not be with a surprise upon you to your ruin, as it will be upon them, in like manner as a thief breaks in, not only unexpectedly, but with dreadful havock, upon them that sleep carelessly, without any thought about it, or being in a fit posture to prevent the mischievous consequences of it.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

5 On the contrary, ye, who are made wise unto salvation, (as it is meet for me to think of you all according to your holy profession) are effectually *called of God out of darkness into his marvellous light*: (1 Pet. ii. 9.) Ye are enlightened with spiritual wisdom and understanding in the knowledge of Christ, and of God's way of salvation by him, *that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints*, (Ephes. i. 17, 18.) and that ye may be watchful and wakeful, and walk honourably in the light of gospel-truth and holiness with your eyes open, and as becomes persons that are exposed to public view in the midst of broad day-light; (*Rom. xiii. 13.*) and so may escape the danger of those, that, under the power of sin, error, and unbelief, walk in such ways of *darkness*, as *not to know whether they are going*: (John xii. 35.) We, who are thus made light in the Lord, are neither covered with the shadows of judaism nor with the darkness of heathenism, nor with the natural darkness and blindness of our own minds, as others still are, and we ourselves once were. (*Eph. v. 8.*)

6 Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

6 Being therefore brought into this happy state, let us take heed that we never give way to a slothful, careless, and indolent frame of spirit, as others do, who are still in their sins, and to whom our Lord's coming to judgment will be a dreadful surprise to their everlasting confusion: But let it be our great concern, that, suitable to our character, as enlightened by the gospel and Spirit of Christ, we maintain a wakeful temper of mind, to watch over our own hearts and ways, and watch against sin and temptations, and for the coming of our Lord; and that we be modest in our thoughts of ourselves, and moderate in our cares and pleasures, relating to the present world, as those that are expecting his glorious appearance, and are ready and prepared for it.

7 For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.

8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 For as they, who give themselves up to sleep, choose the night for it, that their rest may not be disturbed by the noise and business of the day; and they who drink to an excess, and intoxication of the brain, ordinarily do it under the covert of the darkness of the night, that they may not be exposed to shame in the day-time; so they that indulge to carnal security, and surfeit themselves with the cares and pleasures of this world, to stupify and drown all thoughts of a judgment to come, till it overtakes them, before they are aware; (*Luke xxi. 34.*) these are under the power of, and do not care to be disturbed in, the most dangerous security, that proceeds from, and is agreeable to, the darkness of ignorance, error, and sin, that covers them.

8 But let us, who are surrounded with the light of gospel-truth and grace, which shines in our hearts, be vigilant, (*εὐφρονέσθαι*) and moderate in our affections to, and pursuit of the things of this world, like those that look for the coming of our Lord: And as we are in a state of warfare, let us, like soldiers and centinels, that are armed with breast-plates and helmets, to secure the principal seats of the natural life, put on, and daily make use of our Christian armour, especially such parts of it as are necessary for defending our spiritual vitals against all mortal wounds from sin, Satan, and this evil world; that an exercise of faith in Christ, and in God through him, according to his promises, and of love to him and one another, by which faith works, may be like a breast-plate to defend the heart; and that a well-grounded, solid, and satisfying hope of eternal life, through Jesus Christ, may be like a helmet to cover and secure the head in every day of battle, till we come off more than conquerors through him that hath loved us. And we have the greatest encouragement to this hope, and to be diligent in the discharge of all the forementioned duties.

9 For it appears by what God, in the riches of his grace, has already done for and in us, who are the *children of light*, (*ver. 5.*) that he has not ordained us to destruction, as he righteously has those vessels of wrath, who fit themselves for it by their own iniquities; (*see the note on Rom. ix. 23.*) but that, having of his own free and sovereign grace *chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love*, (*Eph. i. 4.*) he has determined to deliver us, as vessels of mercy, from deserved misery, and to bring us to the enjoyment of a glorious state of immortal bliss, through

through the merits and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

10 Who died for us; that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

10 Who died in our room and stead, to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that, by the merit and efficacy of his death, we who believe in him, whether we be among those that shall be alive upon earth, or sleeping in Jesus at his appearing to judgment, may be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so may live in union and communion, and together with him, in all the dignity and delights of the heavenly state for ever. (*Chap. iv. 13, 17.*)

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

11 Therefore in reflection upon, and assured hope of this blessed day, think and talk over these things, as I said before, (*chap. iv. 18.*) to the comfort of your own and one another's souls; and in this way help forward your mutual edification *, as one body, for the benefit of the whole, that ye may *grow up together as a holy temple in the Lord*, (*Ephes. ii. 21.*) with a view to this one thing, namely, your living together with *him*, which will be the consummation of all your happiness, even as ye have already begun to do.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you:

12 And as they, who minister in sacred things, are the ordinary means and instruments that Christ has appointed, and blesses for edification in light and grace, comfort and holiness, unto complete salvation, we, dear brethren, earnestly entreat you to converse freely with, own and honour, and shew your liberality, love, and respect to his faithful servants, and their holy ministrations, who reside, and take pains in his work, among you, for the good of your souls; and especially those, who, by Christ's commission, are placed in authority under him to preside and rule over you, not in temporal, but spiritual concerns; and *that*, not according to laws of their own making, but according to his word, for promoting his kingdom and glory, according to the gifts and graces he has furnished them with; and who in the discharge of their office, as occasions require, warn you against all sin, error, and danger, and reprove what is amiss among you, and exhort, counsel, and encourage you to persevere in the ways of truth, sobriety, and godliness, till ye shall *receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.* (*1 Pet. i. 9.*)

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their

13 And we thus recommend them, and their services, to your honourable esteem and affectionate regards, not merely for what is due to them as Christians, but

N O T E.

* As the words (*ὁ ἓκαστος τὸν ἑαυτοῦ*) *one another* signify also *into one*, and admit of various constructions, they are attended to in the paraphrase.

their work's sake.
And be at peace
among yourselves.

(*ἡμῶν ἐκαστοῦ*) in a superabundant manner, on account of the dignity and importance of the work they are employed in for the glory of God and your spiritual advantage: And as ever ye would not dishonour Christ, nor grieve them, nor his Spirit in them, nor prevent your own profiting by their labours, study the things that make for harmony, peace, and friendship with one another, and with them that are set over you in the Lord, that *the God of love and peace may be with you.* (Ephes. iv. 3. and 2 Cor. xiii. 11.)

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

14 Now, dearly beloved brethren, to draw towards a close of this epistle, we earnestly beseech both ministers and people among you, in their respective places, to admonish those of their faults, that do not keep their rank, (*ἀτακτοί*) or are any way disorderly in their walk with the church, or in their families, and conversation in the world: Warn them of their sin and danger, of the dishonour they bring upon their holy profession, and of the pernicious influence of their example; and endeavour, in a spirit of meekness and love, to reclaim them: Do all that in you lies to encourage and comfort fellow-Christians, that are of a timorous and dejected spirit, ready to give way to melancholy and despairing thoughts, and to faint under their fears and afflictions: Deal tenderly with, and endeavour to strengthen the weak in faith and understanding, and to uphold them from stumbling and falling, who are in danger of it, rather through infirmity, than any evil disposition of mind: And exercise all long-suffering and forbearance, as far as the nature of things permits, and as may be most likely to answer valuable ends, toward persons of all these characters, yea, and towards all men, whether friends or enemies, Christians or not.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men,

15 How ill soever others treat you, keep a guard upon your own angry and resenting passions; and let none of you dare to seek private revenge, to be even with, and retaliate mischief upon the head of any one that shall injure you; but, on the contrary, *overcome evil with good;* (Rom. xii. 17, 19, 20, 21.) and be always studying, and pursuing whatsoever is kind, useful, and beneficial, both one towards another, as fellow-Christians, and even towards all mankind, as fellow-creatures, *doing good to all, as ye have opportunity, and especially to the household of faith.* (Gal. vi. 10.)

16 Rejoice evermore.

16 As to *personal* duties, that are to be added to the foregoing which are *relative*, labour after a cheerful frame of spirit, for the credit of religion and your own comfort, that ye may rejoice in the Lord, in what

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what he is in himself, and in what he has done, is doing, and will do for you; and rejoice in hope of his glory at all times, in the day of adversity, as well as of prosperity.

17 Pray without ceasing.

17 Under a humble sense of your entire dependence upon God, as creatures, and as Christians, of the imperfections of your spiritual state, and the afflictions of various kinds that ye are attended with, or liable to, and of your need of further mercies, of a spiritual and temporal nature, see that ye abound in daily prayer, every morning and evening, (see the note on 2 *Tim.* i. 3.) and be instant in it at all other times, as there may be special occasions and opportunities for it; and ever maintain a praying frame of spirit for solemn addresses to God, and great frequency of holy ejaculations, to mingle with all other duties of the civil and religious life, and to guard you against temptations to sin, and dangers of every kind.

18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

18 In reflection upon your being unworthy of the least of all God's mercies, and upon the riches of his free goodness and undeserved grace, in loading you with benefits that over-balance all your afflictions, labour to keep up a thankful frame of heart, and to go into lively exercises of it, in every condition of life: (see *Psal.* xxxiv. 1. and *Phil.* iv. 6.) For this is a grateful tribute, which God in a special manner requires of you for his own honour, and takes pleasure in, through Jesus Christ, and has laid you under the highest obligations to, on account of his love to you, and of what he has done for you by the great Redeemer.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

19 As these excellent and important duties cannot be discharged, in a right manner, without divine influence, take heed of neglecting, stifling and extinguishing the gifts, graces, and operations of the Holy Spirit, that are compared to fire; (*Mat.* iii. 11.) but be watchful and diligent to fall in with, cherish and improve his gracious illuminations, suggestions, motions, and assistances, as well as his extraordinary inclusive of his ordinary gifts *, to excite you to, and enable

N O T E.

* I can by no means confine *quenching the Spirit* here, and *prophecy* in the next verse, to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, as some do; but find myself constrained, by what goes before and follows after, to think that *quenching the Spirit* includes, or rather chiefly relates to his ordinary enlightning, quickning, sanctifying, and comforting operations; and that *prophecy*, or *prophecies*. (*προφητιας*) relates either to scrip-

ture prophecies, or to preaching, as it sometimes signifies, whether by inspiration or not: (see the note on *Rom.* xii. 6.) For all the other directions, in this context, relate to the ordinary graces and duties of the Christian life, that go into the common practice of religion, and not to any extraordinary gifts; and it seems very unnatural, and unlike the close and pertinent way of our apostle's writing, to suppose that things of so different

enable you for every good work, and to warm your hearts with sacred fervour in performing it.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

20 As the word and Spirit go together, according to God's promise, (*Iſa. lix. 21.*) and all the operations of the Spirit are by means of, or according to his word, do not treat the prophecies of the Old or New Testament with contempt, as if there were nothing in them for your instruction and edification; nor ought ye to neglect, or think lightly of the appointed and authorised ministrations of God's word to explain and enforce it, whether by an extraordinary gift or not.

21 Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.

21 As false teachers are gone abroad in the world, (*1 John iv. 1.*) do not take any thing ye hear upon trust, or receive it with an implicit faith; but examine, try, and prove the truth or falshood of all the doctrines and practices that are preached, (*ver. 20.*) by the standard of the word, (*Iſa. viii. 20.*) in a humble dependence on the light and influence of the Holy Spirit, (*ver. 19.*) to enable you to form a right judgment concerning them: And when, upon trial, ye find what is really good and honourable, (*καλόν*) in point of truth or duty, indulge no longer a sceptical temper about it; but maintain and abide by it, in the steadfastness of your faith, and practice of your lives, rejecting every thing that is contrary to it.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

22 In this manner, keep at the farthest distance possible from all error and sin of every kind, under what specious appearances soever they be presented to you; and even from every thing that you suspect to be false or sinful, or tending to draw yourselves or others into any sin or error.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul, and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming

23 And may that God himself, who is reconciled to you by the blood of Christ, and is the author, giver, and approver of peace one with another, and in your own consciences, and of all manner of prosperity; may he thoroughly purge your whole persons from all iniquity, and make you eminently partakers of his holiness *! And I earnestly beg of him, that all the powers

N O T E S.

ferent a nature should be chiefly, much more only intended, when introduced in the midst of a series of exhortations to the exercise of ordinary graces and duties, that belong to all Christians of every age, as such.

* Your whole spirit, soul and body, has a manifest reference to the received doctrine of the Pythagorean, Platonic, and Stoic philosophers, who considered man as consisting of three parts; of a ra-

tional, and animal or sensitive soul, distinct from one another, and of a body, distinct from both, which seems to be agreeable to the account of the creation of man in *Gen. ii. 7.* where it is said, that God formed man, his body, of the dust of the earth, and breathed into man the breath of life, or *lives*, (*נפש*) and, by means of this union, man became a living soul, partaker of a sensitive, as well as of a rational life: And

ing of our Lord Je-
sus Christ.

powers and faculties of your rational and immortal souls; and the whole frame of your animal spirits, sensitive appetites, and natural tempers; and all the members of your bodies may be cured of every sinful irregularity and disorder, in their propensions and operations, and may be continually kept unreprouable, (*ἀμωμος*) as to any predominant vice, until, and may be found entirely free from all defects, at the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, *when he will present you to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.* (Eph. v. 27.)

24 Faithful is
he that calleth
you, who also will
do it.

24 My prayer for this, on your behalf, is with faith and assured hope, that he, who hath effectually *called you*, by his grace, to his kingdom and glory, (chap. ii. 12.) will also, in faithfulness to his promises, carry on and perfect all that concerns you, in the way and by the means of his own appointment. (See *Phil. i. 6.*)

25 Brethren, pray
for us.

25 As we, Christ's ministering servants, thus affectionately pray for you, we earnestly beg that ye, our Christian-brethren, would, in return, be mindful of us in all your prayers, (which we greatly esteem and need) that God would be with us in our work to assist, own and succeed us, and to perform all things for us, in us, and by us, that we may be faithful in the discharge of our difficult and important trust, and may receive the crown of glory from the chief Shepherd at his appearing. (1 *Pet. v. 4.*)

26 Greet all the
brethren with an
holy kiss.

26 Let our most affectionate and religious respects be presented to all our Christian brethren; and see that ye give usual testimonies of cordial love one to another, by mutual salutations, in the most sincere, pious, chaste, and friendly manner. (See the note on *Rom. xvi. 16.*)

27 I charge you
by the Lord, that
this epistle be read
unto all the holy
brethren.

27 The contents of this epistle, as well as all the inspired writings, are of so great importance, and of such general use and concernment, to the whole church, that I solemnly enjoin those of you, into whose hands it may come; yea, I adjure you, as by a religious oath, in the name, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus *, that it be not concealed from any of its members, but be distinctly and plainly read to all, and every one of them, who ought to live and

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N O T E S.

as the natural temper very much depends upon the different texture and motion of the animal spirits; I have included that under the sensitive soul.

* The apostle's solemn charge that his epistle should be read to all the holy brethren, or members of the church, is an

evident confutation of the doctrine and practice of popery, in forbidding the common people to read the scriptures; and it equally condemns their having the scriptures only in an unknown tongue, which, in effect, is much the same, as not having them at all.

walk in love, as dear brethren, and as a peculiar people zealous of good works, whom Christ has purified to himself, as I charitably believe of them, according to their holy profession.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

28 To conclude with a parting prayer for you, May the free favour of our anointed Lord and Saviour, and all its blessed fruits and effects, abound towards every one of you, for your present edification and growth in light and grace, love and peace, comfort and holiness, till all shall be completed in eternal salvation. So I sincerely desire it may be, and so I trust it will be, in testimony of which, I heartily say, *Amen.*

RECOLUTIONS.

How much more does it concern us to be always ready for Christ's coming to judgment, than to indulge curious inquiries when it shall be! It will be a terrible surprise to some, that vainly promise themselves peace and safety, when certain and sudden destruction will come upon them, ere they are aware. But what a joyful day will it be to true believers! They are not involved in spiritual darkness, like others; but are the children of light, whom God hath not appointed to wrath, but to obtain eternal salvation through a Redeemer: And as he has called them by his grace, and is at peace with them through the blood of Christ, he will sanctify them throughout, and faithfully perfect all that concerns them, till the day of Christ, that they may live together with him who died for them. But as this is to be brought about in the use of proper means, How careful should they be to shake off sloth! They should watch and be sober, and live in the daily exercise of faith, love, and hope; and cultivate an holy peace among themselves, to mutual edification and comfort; should deal tenderly and faithfully one with another; and pray for, and pay all due regard to, those that labour among them in the word and doctrine; and are set over them in the Lord, to counsel, caution, and encourage them in their way to heaven: They should take heed of despising, or neglecting their holy ministrations, and of stifling the light and impressions of the Spirit that attend them. And, having tried and proved all points of religion by the word of God, they should hold fast the truth, as it is in Jesus, and be ever followers of that which is good among themselves, and towards all men; should abstain from angry and revengeful passions, and from all appearance of evil; and ever maintain a joyful, prayerful, and thankful frame of spirit, and give all becoming testimonies of cordial love and friendship one towards another. What a privilege is it to have the free use of the scripture, for learning these and every Christian doctrine and duty, that we may be taught to profit by them! May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all! *Amen.*

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EXPOSITION
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SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL,
TO THE
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IN THE FORM OF A
PARAPHRASE.

THE PREFACE TO THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE
THESSALONIANS.

THIS second Epistle to the *Thessalonians* is generally, and most probably, thought to have been wrote, in less than two years after the former, by the apostle *Paul* from *Corinth*, where he still continued; and, as seems from *chap. i. 3. and ii. 2. and iii. 11.* had received some further account of the state of their affairs; and thereupon wrote this Epistle to commend, encourage, and comfort them under their sufferings for the gospel; and to rectify their misconstruction of what he had said in his former Epistle about the coming of Christ, as if he meant that his second glorious appearing to judgment were just at hand; as also to correct the disorders of some among them, that were too much inclined to an idle life, and might, possibly, grow more and more negligent of secular affairs, from their mistaken notion, as though the end of all things were at hand, and might be tempted to reject the whole gospel, as a forgery, when they should live to see themselves disappointed of the expectation which they had built upon one of its supposed prophecies of so important an event.

The apostle begins with his usual inscription and salutation; and, to encourage their patience under tribulations for Christ, expresses his thankfulness to God for their growth in grace, which would be crowned with eternal glory, when Christ shall appear to their joy, and the destruction of his and their enemies, *chap. i.* He then exhorts them to steadfastness of faith in Christ; and undeceives them with respect to their mistaken apprehensions of his speedily coming to judgment, which he tells them would not be, 'till after the days of antichristian apostacy; from which he blesses God that they should, and prays that they might, be preserved, to their comfort and establishment, *chap. ii.* And he concludes with desiring their prayers,

ers, and with expressions of his confidence that, answerable to his prayers for them, they should be established, and would yield obedience to the apostolic commands in all things; adding exhortations to withdraw themselves from such members of the church as did not ~~ad~~ up to the dignity of their Christian character, after the example which he had set them, and *that* particularly with respect to industry in their several stations; charging the church to be faithful, prudent, and tender in admonishing disorderly walkers; and closing all with his good wishes and affectionate benediction, with which he usually concluded his Epistles, *chap. iii.*

C H A P. I.

The apostle salutes the church at Thessalonica, ver. 1, 2. Blesses God for the growing state of their love and patience, 3, 4. And encourages them to persevere therein under all their sufferings for Christ, in consideration of his coming at the great day of account, to execute righteous judgment upon his and their enemies, and to be glorified in their own complete salvation, which the apostle hoped and prayed for on their behalf, 5,—12.

TEXT.

PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL, with Silas and Timothy, who assisted him in planting the gospel among you, the church at *Thessalonica*, (*Acts xvii. 4, 14.*) which is constituted of believers in God, as the only living and true God, in distinction from all the idols of the heathen, and as our covenant God and Father; and of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only true Messiah, in distinction from all pretenders to that character, whom the unbelieving *Jews* vainly expect. We join in sending a second epistle, and in the most affectionate Christian salutations, as we did in the former, (see the note on *1 Cor. i. 1.*) cordially wishing and praying, that the divine favour, with all its special manifestations, fruits, and effects, and every kind of prosperity that can be included in the term *peace*, relating to God, yourselves, and others, may abound towards all, and every one of you, by the free gift of God our heavenly Father, as the original fountain of it, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only mediator, by and through whom it is communicated, and rendered effectual for your present and eternal happiness.

3 We, reflecting on what we have further heard of the grace of God toward you, feel ourselves to be sweetly constrained unto continual thankful acknowledgements of it for his glory; and to bless his holy name on your behalf, dear brethren, as it becomes

faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you:

7 And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the

us, and we are bound in duty to do; because your faith, which his Spirit wrought in you, by means of our ministry, (1 *Epist.* i. 5. and ii. 1.) is carried on, and exceedingly improved, by his continued aid and influence, in its light, strength, and lively exercise; and your brotherly love, as the fruit of this remarkably growing faith, is proportionably increasing in its fervor, and all suitable expressions and demonstrations of it, in every one of you towards each other.

4 So eminent and exemplary are these graces in you, and your behaviour under the greatest trials of them is so becoming the gospel, that we think of and mention you with high esteem, honour, and delight, in all the churches of the living God, wherever we come, for your firmness of mind, calm submission, and holy resolution, as well as strong and lively faith, which produces them, in bearing up with a truly Christian Spirit, and stedfast adherence to Christ and the gospel, under all the severe persecutions and afflictions of every kind, that still attend you for his sake, as they did when ye first received the word with joy in the Holy Ghost. (1 *Thess.* i. 6, 7.)

5 This carries a plain demonstration (*εvidenτυμα*) of God's having judged right, in permitting you to be exercised with these troubles, which turn so much to his glory, and your own spiritual benefit; and it is an evident proof that there is a just and impartial judgment to come, which will set all things to rights, that ye may be deemed fit and meet subjects to inherit that heavenly kingdom, which God hath prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (*Mat.* xxv. 34.) And it is on account of your professed expectation of this, through Jesus Christ, according to the gospel, that your enemies are so severe upon you; and by the hope of this ye are animated to suffer all hardships with cheerfulness and patience, without fainting under them, (see the notes on 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.) as believing that the issue of all will be to your unspeakable joy, and their insupportable misery;

6 For as much as it is suitable to the rectitude of God's nature and will, law and government, who will judge the world in righteousness, and whose judgment is according to truth, to inflict the severest punishment in due time upon them that now cruelly persecute you; and so to retaliate just indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon them that now unjustly vex and distress you: (*Rom.* ii. 2, 5, 8, 9.)

7, 8 And it is a righteous thing with God, on Christ's account, and in performance of his covenant with him and his members, to give you (*αμοιβη*) a release

the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

leave and dismissal, in due time, from all your present tribulations, and an entrance into a state of perfect rest and peace, together, and in company with us, his ministering servants, and your fellow-sufferers for his sake; (1 *Theff.* iii. iv.) which he assuredly will do, when the Lord Jesus, who has redeemed us by his precious blood, shall be openly manifested, and every eye shall see him, at his descending from heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, (*Phil.* iii. 20.) with a grand retinue of all his holy angels, who excel in strength, and were created by, and for him, and shall attend to do his will, as his ministers in that day; (*Mat.* xiii. 49, 50. and xxiv. 31.) and he shall be revealed in the most august and tremendous manner, as coming with flames of fire all around him, to burn up the earth, and the wicked that are therein; (2 *Pet.* iii. 10.) and to execute wrath on all those that continue in their sins, strangers to the true knowledge of God, and rebellious against the light of nature, like the *Gentiles* that did not glorify him as God; and on all those that are disobedient to the gracious calls of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in his gospel, like the unbelieving *Jews*, and all that reject him.

9 Both these sorts of sinners shall be severely punished, not by an annihilation of their being, but by an eternal loss of all happiness; by a total banishment from his blissful presence, and from all the glorious effects of his saving power, which will be manifested in the saints; (*ver.* 10.) and by suffering the greatest miseries in soul and body from his own immediate hand, who is every where present in being and operation, and from terribly glorious impressions of his Almighty power upon them.

10 This is what he will certainly do, to the utter confusion and ruin of his and your enemies, at the very time when he will appear to your joy, and will come to be glorified in a faithful performance of all his promises unto the complete salvation of his peculiar people, who are sanctified by faith in him, and to be glorified by them in their exalted praises for it; and shall come to be adored by all true believers with transports of joyful astonishment, and with humble and thankful wonder at his grace, and at the great and glorious things he has done for and in them, which will reflect a glory upon him; and this will be with envious amazement of their enemies to see them, whom they so much despised and oppressed before, so highly favoured and honoured by their great Lord, in the day of judgment; because they will then be found among those that cordially embraced the testi-

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mony, that we his servants gave to his person and offices, and to his final appearance, in our preaching the gospel, which will be eminently confirmed, as the truth of God, to their richest advantage in that day.

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power;

11 And according to our hope of your escaping all the terrors, and sharing in all the blessedness and glory of that important day, we are continually recommending you in our stated, earnest, and affectionate prayers to the God of all grace, whom we humbly claim as our covenant-God, that he would carry on, and perfect his good work in your souls, to make you meet and fit persons, in his gracious account, to inherit all the blessings of his kingdom of glory, (*ver.* 5.) to which he hath called you by the gospel; and that he would fill up (*πληρωσι*) what yet remains to be fulfilled of all the free and sovereign purposes of his kindness, love, and grace toward you, and this eminently good work of faith in you, unto all patient, confirmed, and lively exercises, and still further increases of it, and of its fruits of righteousness, till it be finished by the powerful operation of his Spirit in you.

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

12 That so the person, authority, and doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may be highly exalted in your esteem, and in their happy and glorious effects upon you, and may be glorified in heart and life by you; and that ye may arrive at the most glorious state of perfect joy and praise, by virtue of your union with him, according to the free favour of our gracious God, who hath appointed you to it, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath purchased it for you, promised it to you, and will bestow it upon you.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How solemn and august will Christ's appearance to judgment be at the last day! How tremendous to sinners! And how transporting to believers! He will then be visibly seen, as coming from heaven with awful majesty, and surrounding hosts of angels; a flame of fire will go before him to devour his enemies; and he will execute the righteous judgment of God in taking dreadful vengeance on those that hide the light of nature, and rebel against the clearer light of the gospel of Christ, and on all the persecutors of his church and people: They shall be banished his glorious presence, and punished with immediate impressions of his Almighty power upon them to their everlasting destruction. But with what a different aspect, and to what better purposes will he, at the same time, manifest himself to sincere believers, whose hearts are purified by faith! He will come to be glorified and adored in them; and they shall be glorified in and with him, as members in union with him. Happy souls! who are brought cordially to believe the divine testimony that is given in the gospel concerning him, and that shall be confirmed, with a glorious accomplishment of it to themselves, in the great day. What thanks are due to God on their behalf! How justly may his servants glory in these objects of his love, and in its powerful effects upon them! And with what patience, faith, and hope, may they themselves endure all tribulations that befall them, in view and prospect of this blessed day, when the righteous God will, according to his promise, and the merit of his Son, make them rich amends for all their sufferings.

for him! May grace and peace be multiplied to them from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ! May all the good pleasure of God's goodness, and the work of faith, be fulfilled in them with power, by perfecting all that concerns them, in order to their glorifying the name of Christ in this world, and their being glorified with him in the world to come, according to the freeness and riches of the Father and Son's grace, as revealed in the gospel.

C H A P. II.

The apostle cautions the Thessalonians against an erroneous notion, as though the time of Christ's coming to the final judgment were just at hand, 1, 2. Assures them that there would first be a general apostacy from the faith, and a revealing of the antichristian man of sin, whom he describes by his rise, reign, and ruin, and shews the just destruction that would come upon his insatuated subjects, that had pleasure in unrighteousness, 3,—12. But blesses God for the security of the Thessalonians from apostacy, by virtue of their eternal election, and effectual calling, and thereupon repeats his exhortation to steadfastness, and prays for them, 13,—17.

TEXT.

NOW we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

PARAPHRASE.

HAVING now, my dear Christian brethren, to encourage and comfort you under all your present tribulations, reminded you of the glorious coming of Christ, which will be to your unspeakable joy, and the everlasting destruction of all his and your enemies, (*chap. i. 6,—10.*) I, with whom *Silvanus* and *Timothee* join, (*chap. i. 1.*) proceed to another principal design of this epistle, which is to rectify a mistake, that some have been led into, as though Christ were now suddenly coming to judgment. We therefore earnestly entreat, and solemnly adjure you, by your belief, expectation, and desire of the awful coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the final judgment of all mankind, at the last day; and by your hopes of being then gathered together with us, and with all his saints, in the general assembly and church of the first-born, to meet the Lord in the air, and to be ever with him in his blissful presence (*1 Thess. iv. 17.*) * we beseech you to think seriously about an affair of such vast importance;

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NOTE.

† That this coming of Christ relates not to his coming to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, but to the final judgment, is very evident; because this is the sense in which the apostle all along speaks of his coming in this and his former epistle: (see first *Epist. ii. 19.* and *iii. 13.* and *iv. 13,—17.* and *v. 2, 13.* and second *Epist. i. 6,—10.*) And as the preposition (*ὅτι*) with a genitive case, often signifies concerning or about; and the *E-*

thiopic version, and *Theophilact's* manuscript renders it concerning, the paraphrase gives a hint of that sense; though with the generality of commentators, prefer the other, which puts (*ὅτι*) concerning for (*διὰ*) by, and seems to fix the meaning of this passage in the easiest light, and to be most agreeable to the apostle's frequent manner of adjuration in important cases, which he also had used in his first epistle, *chap. v. 27.*

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

2 That ye may not easily, and so soon after the instructions we have given you relating to it, be misled into any notions, contrary thereunto, that would disconcert, or stagger your minds, or throw them into perplexity and confusion, by means of any false suggestions, that are spread among you, either by mere pretenders to a spirit of prophecy, or by ignorant, or designing misconstructions of what we have delivered by word of mouth, or by writing in our former epistle, (*chap. iv. 15,—18.*) or by appeals to spurious writings, or traditions, that are forged and fathered upon us, as though, in one or other of these ways we had affirmed, or at least given intimations, from which it might be gathered as our opinion, that the day of our blessed Lord's glorious appearing to the final judgment were just now instantly coming on; whereas no such thing was ever said, or designed to be suggested by us; and your belief of it would be of dangerous consequence, since upon your being disappointed of your expectation, as ye certainly would, with respect to the *time* of his coming, ye might be tempted to disbelieve his ever coming at all; and to conclude against the truth of the whole gospel itself, of which this is so essential an article.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition:

3 Take heed that no man impose upon you, or seduce you into this pernicious notion, by these or any other pretences whatsoever; there being no truth in it: For we now assure you by divine revelation, that the awful day of judgment is at a remoter distance, and will not come, till after there shall be a remarkable and general apostacy from the faith, worship, and holiness of the gospel, and an antichristian power, consisting of a succession of impious men, shall be made manifest, which for subtilty and strength, in countenancing and propagating the vilest corruption of doctrines and manners, may be fitly styled, by way of eminence, *that man of sin* * who will set

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* *That man of sin, the son of perdition*, though mentioned in the singular number, signifies not merely any one particular person; but a succession of men, in like manner as the succession of the *kings and high priests of Israel* were spoken of, as though they had been but one person; in describing their characters, and the law concerning them. *Deut. xvii. 14,—20. Lev. xxi. 10,—15. Numb. xxxv. 25, 28. and Heb. ix. 7.* and this is interpreted to mean any high priest in his day; and the whole order of them together is meant by *the high priest*. The same also may be observed

with respect to *that which with-holds and he who now lets, and will let, till it be taken away*, ver. 6, 7. which, (as many of the ancient fathers understood it, and the event afterwards proved) pointed at the heathen *Roman empire*, or *Emperors* at the head of it, in a succession of them, though the apostle hints this with great caution, only in a covert way, to avoid giving offence to the Emperor, and provoking his wrath against the Christians, as a seditious sort of people, that fomented notions tending to the destruction of the *Roman empire*.

up himself, and be discovered in the plainest characters, by being at the head of all abominable wickedness, (see the note on *ver.* 4.) under the Christian name; who also may be called *the son of perdition*, as he will cause the destruction of the souls and bodies of multitudes, and as he himself will be destroyed, or go into perdition, and be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. (Rev. xvii. 11. and xix. 20.)

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

4 This man of sin is emphatically the great *antichrist*, who, considering him as arrived at the height of his temporal and ecclesiastical dignity, is an opposer of Christ, in the perfection and glory of all his offices, and a cruel persecutor of his members; he also, according to *Daniel's* prophecy, (*chap.* xi. 36.) magnifies himself above, and assumes sovereign authority over kings and emperors, who, on account of their office, are styled *gods*, (Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6.) and in the title of the *Roman* emperors, are called *august*, (*ceasar*) as if they were to be worshipped; and he exalts himself above the gods of the heathen, by claiming a greater and more extensive power in heaven, earth, and hell, than ever was ascribed to any one of them; yea, above the true God himself, who is the only object of religious adoration, by dispensing with his laws, and ordering, in direct contradiction to his command, (*Mat.* iv. 10. see the note there) that religious worship should be paid to creatures and images, which is due to God alone; and by requiring a more absolute obedience to his own authority, than to the commands of God himself: So that, as the true God formerly resided in the temple at *Jerusalem*, this grand *antichrist* seats himself, as on his throne, in the church, which is spoken of as *the temple of God*: (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. and 2 Cor. vi. 16.) And by exercising supreme authority over it, giving laws to, and receiving divine titles and homage from it, in its apostate state, he makes a vain shew, as if he really were God*.

NOTE.

* All these characters of *the man of sin* are plainly applicable to, and exemplified in popery, inclusive of the hierarchy of *Rome*, with the Pope at the head of it, in successive generations; and fully agree to none that has appeared in the world besides them; for they are monsters of wickedness, that are guilty of, and patronize cruel persecutions, perfidious breaches of faith, and idolatrous worship of saints, angels, and images; and that encourage all manner of iniquity, by pretended pardons, and indulgences, and licencing houses of debauchery;

and they, though not professedly, yet really oppose Christ in all his offices; in his *prophetic* office, by teaching for doctrines the commandments of men; in his *priestly* office, by the doctrine of merit, the sacrifice of the mass, and joining saints and angels, as intercessors with Christ; and in his *kingly* office, by dispensing with his laws, and setting up the Pope, as the supreme head of the church. And some of their Popes have treated kings and emperors with insolent contempt, as their vassals, to be deposed, or enthroned, at their pleasure; have

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5 Have

5 Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way.

5 Have ye been so careless as to have forgotten former notices of these things? this seems to be the case with some of you. But cannot ye now recollect, ye certainly might, that I *Paul* myself*, when personally preaching to, and conversing with you at *Thessalonica*, gave you sufficient intimations, that the day of Christ's coming to judgment is not just at hand; but that, in the course of divine dispensations, there must be first a general defection from the faith, and the rise of the antichristian man of sin?

6 And if ye duly reflect upon what I have told you by word of mouth, and have now added in this Epistle, ye may easily gather what it is that at present restrains and hinders the complete revelation of the man of sin, as the head of the great apostacy: It may well be supposed in the very nature of things, though dangerous to speak it out, (see the note on *ver.* 3.) that it is the heathen *Roman* empire under one political head, according to the form in which it now subsists. This must be taken away to make room for the introduction of the head of the apostacy, that he may be manifested in the height of his power and authority, pomp and grandeur, in his proper season, according to the appointed time of God for it.

7 For the great defection, which may justly be called *the mystery of iniquity*, or of *that wicked one*, (*ver.* 8.) on account of the secrecy and subtilty of its spreading, and the unsearchable depth of sin and error that is wrapt up in it, and will hereafter more plainly and openly shew itself, and begins already to diffuse its malignant influence in pride and worldly-mindedness, will-worship, and worshipping of angels, and in corrupting the pure doctrine of justification,

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excommunicated them, and absolved their subjects from allegiance to them; others have trod on the necks of emperors, kicked off their crowns with their feet, and set them on with their feet again, and obliged them to hold the Pope's stirrup, when he alighted from, or mounted his horse. These haughty ecclesiastical tyrants have set themselves in the place of God, by assuming authority over the souls and consciences of men, and admitting of blasphemous adoration, under the titles of a *God on earth*, and the *Lord God the Pope*; and they have exalted themselves even above God himself, by not only repealing his laws, but making the whole authority of his word to depend on the authority of the church. These, and such like things, are notorious in the church

of *Rome*; and the description here given of her, stands in good agreement with the representation that is made of the *Romish* antichristian power in the *Revelation*, under the figures of *Mystery. Babylon, the great whore that sits on many waters, the beast and the false prophet.*

* The apostle here refers to what he had said to the *Thessalonians* in his personal ministry and conversation, in which it is reasonably supposed, that he had delivered more things, relating to these points, to which he here appeals, than are to be found, or were proper to be wrote, in his first epistle to them: Accordingly he speaks, *ver.* 15. of the *traditions* they had received by word, as well as by his epistle. (See the note there.)

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8 And then shall
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his mouth, and
shall destroy with
the brightness of
his coming:

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and won't H. H. H.
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9 Even him
whose coming is
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as though it were to be by the works of the law; and this would quickly appear in all its power and wide extent, were it not that the imperial Pagan government, which hitherto prevents it, will continue so to do, till this obstacle be removed.

8 And then, through the growing ambition and luxury of ecclesiastics, under the protection and indulgence of Christian emperors, and by means of the division of the Empire itself, into ten kingdoms, which will give their power to the beast, (*Rev. xvii. 12, 13.* see the note there) that wicked one will mount the throne, like a lawless person, (*anomos*) who will dispense with, and exalt his authority above, all laws human and divine, and be subject to no law himself: But be it known, for the comfort of the true church, that in the divinely appointed time, he, with all his hierarchy, authority, and grandeur, shall certainly sink and fall; whom the Lord Jesus Christ will begin to blast by the preaching of the gospel in its purity and power, and by spiriting up a set of brave reformers to oppose, and protest against his supremacy, and all his corruptions in doctrine and worship; and he will afterward more eminently slay him, and all his adherents, as with a sword, by the judicial sentence that will proceed from his mouth, and be executed by his command, and by his word and Spirit, when he shall set up his glorious kingdom of truth, righteousness, joy, and peace in the earth; and finally, by his coming to judge the world, and take vengeance on all his enemies in their utter destruction at the last day: In these various ways it may be said, in the language of ancient prophecy, that *he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the earth.* (*Isa. xi. 4.*)

9 The manner of this wicked one's introducing and supporting his tyranny and errors, which shall at length be destroyed, will be in imitation of *the father of lies, who was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth,* (*John viii. 44.*) and under his influence, according to the energy of his operation, *who works effectually in the children of disobedience:* (*Ephes. ii. 2.*) And this wicked one will exert himself, for upholding and promoting his abominable empire, with all his might, under a pretence of power from God for it; and with sham pretences to miracles, and to wonderful works of a supernatural kind, like what our Lord himself performed; (see the note on *Acts ii. 22.*) but which, in this pretender, are all a cheat to impose upon, and deceive the nations of the earth.

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth:

10 And, at the instigation of the diabolical spirit, the apostacy will be carried on, under its papal head, with all subtle and tricking arts, managed by the most unrighteous methods, to delude those that comply with them, to their own utter perdition; because through the carnality and corruption of their own hearts, and the malignant influence of Satan, which they readily yielded themselves up to, they did not cordially receive Christ in the whole of his character, who is the Truth; (*John* xiv. 6.) nor would embrace the truth and purity of the gospel concerning him, with approbation, that they might obtain salvation according to, and by means of that revelation, which shows the only way to eternal life through him.

11 And therefore, as they did not like to retain the knowledge of the truth, God, in his righteous judgment, for the punishment of their iniquity in its own kind, will deliver them up to the dreadful efficacy of error, (*εσθλῆσαν πλάνης*) as the chosen way of their own wicked inclinations, and to a judicial hardness of heart, and the power of *the god of this world, who blinds their minds*, (see the note on *Rom.* ix. 18.) that they might give their free assent and consent to delusive forgeries, superstitions and idolatry, fabulous legends, and monstrous doctrines and practices, that have no truth in them; but are all a heap of falsehood and lying vanities;

12 They shall be justly left to the power of this foolish and perverse disposition of their own evil hearts, that, according to their deserts, all of them (*κεκρίσται*) might be judged and condemned, and righteously punished with the most awful destruction, who disbelieved and rejected Christ, and the truth of the gospel; but, on the contrary, were exceeding fond of, and took delight in all wicked designs, words and deeds, frauds and persecutions, as what are most agreeable to their own corrupt taste.

13 But as to you, our dear Christian brethren, whom we think of with pleasure, as those whom the Lord himself peculiarly loves, and will preserve from this dreadful apostacy, We have this to say for your comfort, that *in every remembrance of you*, (*Phil.* i. 3.) we cannot but look upon ourselves as bound in duty and affection to bless God heartily on your behalf; because we are well satisfied, by what we saw of the powerful efficacy of the gospel upon you, when ye first received it, (*1 Thess.* i. 2.—5. see the notes there) and by what we have since heard of its happy and holy fruits, as they continue still farther to appear in you, (*chap.* i. 3, 4.) that God, of his own mere grace, has from the beginning of the world,
yea,

yea, from all eternity *, made a special choice of you to complete salvation by Jesus Christ, (1 *Theff.* v. 9.) as the final happiness which he designed to bring you to, through the renovation of your whole souls in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after the image of God, which is wrought in you by the Holy Spirit, *without which no man shall see the Lord*; (Heb. xii. 14.) and through a fiducial trust in Christ, and faithful adherence to him, according to the truth of the gospel-revelation of him, as God's appointed way and means of bringing you safe to glory; the end and means being inseparably connected in his decree, and in the execution of it.

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

14 To which salvation, as to be brought about in this way, he has now, as the fruit of electing love, effectually called you, (*ver.* 13. and *Rom.* viii. 30. see the note there) by our preaching the gospel, not a gospel which we are the authors of, but a dispensation of which is committed to us, and which is faithfully ministered by us, in opposition to all other pretended gospels, (1 *Cor.* ix. 17. and *Gal.* i. 8.) that ye might be thereby brought, through the attending operation of the Spirit, unto a title and claim to, and, at length, the full enjoyment of that immortal state of bliss and glory, which our Lord Jesus Christ has purchased, prepared, and taken possession of, as your Head and Forerunner, for you, and hath promised, and at the last day will adjudge and bring you to, that ye may behold his glory, and be made like him, and completely happy with him, in soul and body for ever.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have

15 In consideration therefore of what God has thus graciously designed and done for you, dear brethren, and of the promised assistances which from thence ye may further well expect and depend upon,

We

N O T E.

* By from the beginning some would understand from the beginning of the gospel's being preached to, and received by them; but as, in the next verse, the apostle speaks of their being called by the gospel as a distinct thing, in consequence of God's having chosen them from the beginning, according to what he had said, 1 *Epist.* i. 4, 5. of knowing their election of God; because the gospel came to them, not in word only, but in power, &c. (see the note there) and as the phrase from the beginning (*απ' αρχης*) signifies the beginning of time, 1 *John* iii. 8. and from the beginning is of the same import with from everlasting, *Prov.* viii. 23. and our apostle speaks of God's

having chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy and without blame before him in love: (*Eph.* i. 4.) All this shows, that his calling the *Thessalonians*, by the gospel, is to be distinguished from his having chosen them; and that his having chosen them from the beginning is to be understood of his having done it from eternity, in pursuance of which he called them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 *Tim.* i. 9, 10.) Vide *Wits.* *Oecon.* *Fœd. lib.* iii. cap. 4. sect. 21. &c.

have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

We earnestly beseech you to stand fast in the faith, comfort and hope, doctrine, holiness, and profession of the gospel; and stedfastly to maintain the important points of truth and duty *, which ye have been instructed in by us, the servants of Christ, (*chap. i. 1. and 1 Thess. i. 1.*) whether by word of mouth, while we were with you; or by this, and our former epistle, which contain an important part of the faith, that is *delivered to the saints*, (*Jude, ver. 3.*) as the only standard of doctrines, worship, and obedience.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace,

16 Now, upon the great encouragement we have to hope well concerning you, as the chosen and called of God, (*ver. 13, 14.*) We earnestly pray, with comfortable assurance of being heard, that our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the divine Saviour, who has redeemed us by his blood, and purchased eternal glory for us, and will be our judge at the last day to confer it upon us †; and that God the Father, even our covenant-God and Father in him, who, we trust, has loved both you and us with an everlasting love, and has by manifestations of it revived our souls with his consolations, which are everlasting in their foundation, matter, tendencies, and final issues, though not always or alike sensibly enjoyed, while we are in this present state of imperfection; and who hath given us freely, by his grace, the best of all hope, even a good hope of eternal life, which is solid, scriptural, and well-grounded, and shall never *make us ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us;* (*Rom. v. 5.*)

17 We,

N O T E S.

* This *holding the traditions* relates only to such doctrines as the apostle and his fellow-labourers had delivered to them, pertaining to the only rule of faith, worship, and obedience, by their personal preaching and conversation, or by the writing of this, and the former epistle; and therefore it cannot give the least countenance to the *oral traditions* of the Papists, which they pretend have been handed down through many hundreds of years; but are really stuffed with such ridiculous and incredible stories, as neither agree with the scripture nor with common sense: And as, by all these traditions, they cannot point out so much as one of the particulars that were delivered to the *Thessalonians* by word of mouth from the apostle, any farther than they are recorded in the New Testament, or may be gathered from thence, it is time enough for us to at-

tend to *their traditions*, when they can produce testimonies to them as authentic, and well-known to us, as these were to the *Thessalonians*; or can prove them by the word of God. (See the note on *1 Cor. xi. 2*)

† Our Lord Jesus Christ is here considered as the object of religious worship, and the author of the blessings that are, implicitly at least, prayed for from him, in the same manner equally, and together with the Father, which supposes his proper divinity, according to the established and unchangeable law of worship, as recited by himself, *Matth. iv. 10.* and his being mentioned in this manner, even before the Father, takes off all pretences of his inferiority, either in Deity or worship, on account of the Father's being at other times mentioned before him.

17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work:

17 We, I say, earnestly, and with humble confidence, beg, that these adorable persons in the God-head would, with concurring agency, according to the respective parts which they have voluntarily undertaken in the economy of salvation, *fill* your souls, yet more and more, *with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost*, (Rom. xv. 13.) and may be comforted under all troubles, fears, and dangers; and that they would strengthen and fortify you immovably, unto all perseverance in every doctrine of the gospel, which brings good tidings of great joy; as also in every sort of sound speech, which cannot be condemned; and in every good work of righteousness, with regard to God, yourselves, and one another.

RECollections.

How exceeding dangerous is it to be misled into mistaken expectations of divine appearances, like that of Christ's immediately coming to judgment, left, through disappointment therein, we should be tempted to disbelieve the whole gospel, which we thought encouraged them! It is no wonder that the promises of Christ's second appearing are not yet fulfilled, since we are assured by the spirit of prophecy, that the general apostacy, under the man of sin, or papal power, which assumes the prerogatives of God, was first to rise and reign, till it shall be destroyed by the Spirit of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and since this power could not be set up till the government of the *Roman Cæsars* should be dissolved. But, alas! how dreadful must their condemnation and destruction be, whom God, in his righteous judgment, gives up to such a spirit of delusion, as fondly to believe, and voluntarily comply with, all the idolatry, superstition, tyranny, and corruptions of popery, which are propagated by satanical forgeries, and vain pretences to miraculous powers and signs, that, in reality, are no other than lying wonders! God righteously suffers the admirers of these to be deceived by them; because they did not like to embrace the truth of the gospel concerning Christ, as the only mediator, that they might be saved. But O how happy is the state of those that are secured from these damning errors, by God's having, in his free love, chosen them from eternity to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, which stand inseparably connected in the purpose of God, and in the execution of it, as the way and means of bringing about this glorious end! In order hereunto he effectually calls them, unto the obtaining of the immortal life, which Christ hath brought to light by the gospel, and will advance them to, at the last day. With what encouraging hope, and confidence of a blessed issue, upon these grounds, may believers receive, and stedfastly adhere to, what is delivered by inspired writers; and be earnest in prayer, that their Lord and Saviour, and their God and Father in him, would give them such consolation as is of an everlasting nature, and such good hope, through grace, as shall never disappoint them; but shall be to their abundant joy, and establishment in every good doctrine, way, and work, till they arrive at heavenly glory!

C H A P. III.

The apostle desires prayer for himself and his fellow-labourers; expresses his confidence in the Thessalonians, and prays for them, 1,—5. Charges them to withdraw from disorderly walkers, and particularly from those that were lazy, and busy-bodies, contrary to his example and command, 6,—15. And concludes with a prayer for them, and with a salutation and benediction, 16,—18.

TEXT.

FINALLY, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified even as it is with you;

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, my dear brethren in Christ, to draw towards a close of this epistle, Let me earnestly entreat your fervent prayers for me, and my fellow-labourers, such as *Silvanus* and *Timothy*, who join with me in writing to you, (*chap. i. 3.*) that we may be directed, assisted, and owned in our great and difficult work, for which we are insufficient of ourselves; and that the gospel of salvation, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the author and principal subject, may run with speed and success, (*τεσχη*) and be spread and propagated in its purity and power all around, far and wide, and not hindered in its progress; but may bear down all opposition before it, and be received with honour and esteem, as of divine authority, and a glorious scheme of salvation; and may produce glorious effects in the conversion, edification, and holy conversation of multitudes, wherever it is preached, even as it has among you. (*See 1 Thess. i. 5, 6.*)

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

2 And we in a special manner beg your prayers, that we may be kept, or rescued out of the hands of unbelieving *Jewish* zealots, and delivered from *perils among false brethren*, (*2 Cor. xi. 26.*) who are (*α-τονοι*) insolently perverse and absurd in their reasonings and prejudices against us, and are maliciously wicked in their principles and practices, endeavouring to stop our mouths, and throw us into prisons, and would persecute us unto death: Many of these we meet with wherever we go, as we did at *Thessalonica*: (*Acts xvii. 5.* and *1 Thess. ii. 15, 16, 18.*) For it is undeniably evident from hence, that, even among professors of religion and Christianity itself, all of them do not cordially embrace Christ, according to the truth of the gospel, by that faith, which works by love, and purifies the heart.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

3 But though false and hypocritical pretenders, who receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved, (*chap. ii. 10.*) be left of God to themselves, and turn violent enemies to us and you for the gospel's sake; yet ye ought not to be discouraged upon this account: For as ye have received the word of

God, not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe; (1 Theff. ii. 13.) so ye may assuredly depend upon his faithfulness, in making good his covenant-promise of persevering grace, (Jer. xxxii. 40.) that he will confirm, settle, and strengthen you in the doctrine and grace of faith, and in your holy profession of it, and practice of godliness according to it; and will so far preserve and secure you from the power of tribulation, sin, and Satan, and all his wicked instruments, as that none of them shall prevail to your final destruction.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

4 And as your preservation is to be in a way of holy obedience; so we have an entire trust and joyful confidence in the Lord Jesus concerning you, as believers in him, and vitally united to him, that, through his grace, ye not only hitherto have been, and still are, but shall perseveringly continue to be, obedient in all things to those commandments which we have delivered, and may further deliver to you, in his name, and by his authority. (ver. 6.)

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

5 And, according to this our hope in Christ, concerning you, we earnestly pray that the Lord the Spirit * would, by his light and influence, set to rights all the irregular motions of your hearts, and carry them more and more in a straight course, as by a direct line, (*κατευθυναι*) into a clear and experimental acquaintance with the love of God to you, and into the liveliest exercises of your love to him, under a sense of his having first loved you; (1 John iv. 19.) as also into affecting and endearing reflections upon, and imitation of, the wonderful patience with which Christ endured all his sufferings for your sake; and into a patient continuance in well-doing, (Rom. ii. 7.) under all your troubles and dangers for his sake, and a patient expectation of his second coming, (1 Theff. i. 10.) which will ere long put an end to all your trials, and make you a rich and everlasting amends for them.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

6 Now, dear brethren in the Lord, having expressed our good opinion and hopes concerning you, as a spiritual and holy body, and the sincere desire of our souls for you all, We take this opportunity to add,

N O T E.

* The Lord here applied to seems to be best understood of the Lord the Spirit (*Κυριου πνευματος*) as 1 Cor. iii. 18. may properly be rendered: For the Father and Son are spoken of as persons distinct from this Lord, who directs the heart into the love of God the Father, and the

patient waiting for Christ, or patience of Christ: (*υπομονη του Χριστου*) And the things, here prayed for, are represented in scripture, as the special and immediate work of the Holy Ghost. (See Rom. v. 5. and Gal. v. 15, 22.)

9
we
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stamp
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Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

add, that, as we hear some of your number continue to be idle, and busy-bodies, (*ver. 11.*) notwithstanding the solemn injunctions we had given to the contrary; (*1 Thess. iv. 11, 12.*) so we, in reflection hereupon, think it high time to enjoin you, as a church, by the authority, and for the glory of Christ, our common Lord and Saviour, from whom we have received our commission and instructions, that ye remove from your holy communion, and avoid all unnecessary familiarity and conversation with every brother, or member of your religious society, of what rank or station soever, that lives irregularly; going into, and persisting in such a course of laziness, and intermeddling with other people's affairs, as is very injurious to public and family-peace, and dishonourable to the Christian character; and no way agreeable to the admonitions which we have delivered, whether by word of mouth, or in our former epistle; (*chap. ii. 15.* see the note there) and exemplified in our own behaviour, when we were present with you.

7 ~~For~~ yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you:

7 For by these means, ye yourselves very well know the manner in which ye ought to imitate us, and walk answerable to our directions, as ye cheerfully did at your conversion: (*1 Thess. i. 6.*) For we can appeal, not only to the Lord himself, but even to your own consciences, as *our witnesses, how holily, justly, and unblameably, we all along behaved ourselves among you;* (*1 Thess. ii. 10.*) and how careful we were, not to live at a slothful disorderly rate, contrary to the rule of the word, which we laid before you, when we were at *Thessalonica.*

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

8 No, nor did we partake of any one's food, or table with him, at free-cost, without paying for it; but earned our bread before we eat it, by diligent and wearisome labour with our own hands, taking abundance of pains, and undergoing great fatigues early and late, by day and night; sometimes in preaching the gospel, as we had opportunity for it, and at others, in working, as occasions required, at handicraft trades in several places, (*Acts xviii. 3. and xx. 34.*) and particularly among you, (*1 Thess. ii. 9.* see the note on *1 Cor. ix. 1.*) that we might provide for ourselves, and not be a burden to any of you, as some of a covetous temper, or narrow circumstances, might have thought us, had we been maintained at their expence.

9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you, to follow us.

9 I remind you of this, not as though we had not a just right by virtue of our office, according to the reason of things, and the authority of Christ, to insist upon, and even demand a convenient and comfortable maintenance, in return for our ministerial labours,

as I have asserted and proved at large to others, (1 Cor. ix. 4.—14.) and now mention to you; but we, of our own accord, freely waved all claims of this nature, and worked with our own hands for a livelihood, to take off prejudices against us, as though we were mercenary creatures, and to propagate the gospel the more successfully; and particularly to set you a good example, and (τυποι δαμεν υμιν) give you a pattern of industry in your several callings, that ye might be excited, and even constrained to imitate us therein, as well as to follow our precepts relating to it.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

10 For, having observed appearances of a lazy temper in some, even when we were among you, we strictly commanded you all in general, that if any one of your needy Christian brotherhood, who is able to work for his living, would not take due pains to provide for himself and his family, if he has one, his indolence and sloth should not be indulged by affording him a maintenance out of the charity of the church, which ought to be applied to the relief and comfort of such of their poor, as through sickness or age, or decay of nature, or any other means, are incapable of doing any thing for their own supply. And ye need not wonder, that we, now again, so strenuously urge this point upon you.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

11 For we have been credibly informed, after all that has been said and wrote about it, that there are some idle members of the church, who walk irregularly, in direct contradiction, not only to our express injunctions, and the general rule of Christianity, which establishes all the duties of the civil life; but even to the moral law itself, (*Exod. xx. 11.*) and to the order of all political and religious societies, and of the creation, and the present condition of man, who was formed for activity and business in his original state, and was doomed to *eat his bread in the sweat of his brows*, after the fall: (*Gen. ii. 15. and iii. 19.*) These, going out of their rank, (ατακτος) like loose soldiers, do not care to be employed in their proper callings, or in any useful services at all; but, as is common with such sort of people, they waste their time in gadding abroad, and fauntering about, and curiously prying, and officiously thrusting themselves into, and making their idle remarks upon other people's matters, which they have no call to meddle with; but which they busy themselves about, to the great disturbance of particular persons, families and neighbours, and the creating of jealousies, misunderstandings, and quarrels between friends, and setting them at variance by their tattling and tale-bearing humour, which makes

makes them perfect incendiaries, and the nuisance and pest of all company, wherever they come.

11 Now them that are such, we command, and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

12 Now, whosoever they be, that are of this slothful and pernicious disposition and behaviour, we again solemnly charge them by divine authority; and earnestly entreat them by the endearing love of Christ, our great Lord and Master, and for his sake, as ever they would avoid his displeasure, and honour their profession of his name, that, according to our former exhortation, (1 *Thef.* iv. 11. see the note there) they would study to be quiet, and do their own business, with a meek and peaceable frame of spirit, and set themselves diligently to work with their own hands, in their respective stations; and so, by the blessing of God on their honest labour, may provide such food for themselves and theirs, as they have duly earned, and bought with their own money, that they may be beholden to no one's charity for their subsistence; and that, instead of being burdensome to others, they may *have to give to him that needs.* (Eph. iv. 28.)

13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing.

13 But as for those of you, dear brethren, who, to the honour of your Christian character, have minded your own business, and not officiously meddled with other people's affairs, we beseech you to persist unweariedly, and without reluctance, in a diligent discharge of the civil, as well as religious duties of your respective stations; and particularly in doing good, with all chearfulness and liberality, to the industrious, and yet necessitous poor among you; (*Gal.* vi. 9, 10.) though ye ought to withhold your charity from such, as are able, but not willing, to work for their own livelihood. (*ver.* 10.)

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

14 And if there still be any slothful person of your community, who pays no regard to, nor is reformed by the commandments and exhortations, that we have delivered by Christ's authority, as before, so in this epistle, relating to such, (*ver.* 6, 10, 12.) It is your duty, as a church, to set a brand of infamy upon him, by casting him out, as an unworthy member; and not to countenance him afterwards, by an intimacy of friendship, or unnecessary familiarity in conversation with him, (*οὐκ ὁμιλῆσαι*) to the end that, by your shy and cool carriage toward him, he may turn inwards, and blush and be ashamed, in reflection on his sin; and, through divine grace, may be brought to repent of it, and to loath and abhor himself for it, with full purpose of heart to depart from it.

15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him.

15 But, in order to your attaining this great and good end of excommunication, Take heed of treating him before hand with austerity and roughness, as if ye aimed at his ruin in temporal or spiritual concerns,

nish him as a brother.

cerns, and not merely at the destruction of the flesh, that his soul may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus: (see the note on 1 Cor. v. 5.) Nor ought ye immediately to look upon him, as an implacable and utterly incorrigible enemy to God and godliness, and to Christ and the gospel; but should deal tenderly, as well as faithfully and plainly with him as a brother, in setting the evil of his ways before him, and passing the awful censure, if necessary, upon him, and in giving him seasonable admonitions, as opportunities offer, considering the relation that he either bears or has bore to you, in hopes that, by the blessing of God on such attempts, he may be reclaimed, and restored to his former place in the church.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always, by all means. The Lord be with you all.

16 Now may the Lord Jesus himself, our only peace-maker with God, and the author, purchaser, and giver of all manner of peace and happiness, make you prosperous in all grace and holiness, and fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may have peace in your own souls, and one with another, and may be a harmonious and flourishing church, at all times, and by all manner of means, that are suited, by divine appointment, to promote it! And that the means, used for this purpose, may be effectual, we earnestly beg that this blessed Lord, who commands and loves peace, and delights in the prosperity of his servants, would afford all and every one of you his special presence, in a way of providence and grace, to protect and guide, assist, comfort, and perfect all that concerns you, in whatsoever relates to you severally, and altogether as a church.

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

17 To conclude with the salutation, which I Paul write with my own hand, as a sure mark to distinguish my Epistles from such as may be forged under my name; and, as pretended to come from me, may deceive and trouble the church, (*chap. ii. 2.*) whenever any of my letters are wrote by an amanuensis as dictated by me, I always at the close add, in my own hand-writing, the following words, or to the effect, (see the note on *Rom. xvi. 22.*)

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

18 May the free love and favour of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, inclusive of all its special manifestations, fruits, and effects, continually abound to all and every one of you! In testimony of the sincerity of my desire and pleasing hopes hereof, I heartily say, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How earnestly ought we to pray for the success of the glorious gospel, and the preservation and liberty of Christ's servants, that their preaching it may not be obstructed by the violence of unbelieving, perverse and wicked men! And what a pleasure is it when they, to whom the care of churches is committed, have

a satisfaction in their own minds, that the Lord will establish them in the faith, hope, and holiness of the gospel, and will engage their hearts to do his commandments, as delivered to them in his name! But, alas! How grievous is it to find, that any church-members are disorderly walkers, lazy in their own proper affairs, and mischievous busy-bodies in other people's matters, to the scandal of the Christian name! The churches, to which persons of these characters belong, ought, in case they cannot be reclaimed, to withdraw from them, and pass such a censure as may be a mark of disgrace upon them, and then shun all unnecessary familiarities of conversing with them, to make them ashamed of the evil of their doings, that are directly contrary to the precepts and example of the holy apostles; and yet they should be treated, as far as the nature of things will bear, in a brotherly way, to bring them to repentance. How unreasonable is it that idle and disorderly walkers should live upon the charity of others! But how cheerfully and generously should the industrious and helpless poor be relieved, according to their wants! May all the churches of Christ have peace among themselves, and prosperity of every kind, from the Lord Jesus, and salute one another with the sincerest Christian affection! May their hearts be directed into the love of God, and a patient waiting, under their various tribulations, for Christ's second coming to put an end to them! And may his grace be ever with them all! *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL
E X P O S I T I O N
OF THE
FIRST EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL
TO
T I M O T H Y,
IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E.

THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

TIMOTHY was an excellent youth, whose father was a *Greek*, and his mother a pious *Jewess*, (Acts xvi. 1, 3.) who had taken a religious and exemplary care to educate him in the knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures, from his childhood up; (2 *Tim.* i. 5. and iii. 15.) and, Providence casting him under the ministry of the apostle *Paul*, this young man, through the attending power of the Holy Ghost, was converted to the faith of *Christ*, as seems to be intimated *chap.* i. 2.; (see the note there) and was so enriched with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, that the apostle had a great affection for him, and soon turned his thoughts toward him for an assistant in the work of the ministry: And that the *Jews*, to whom the apostle first preached, might not have the least exception against this his associate, as the son of a *Gentile* by the father's side, he ordered him to be circumcised, which he had not been in the days of his infancy, but now consented to be; and then took him for his companion under the character of an evangelist, an office next to that of the apostleship, in planting and watering the churches.

Though *Paul* had, doubtless, taken much pains with this young evangelist in private conversation, to fit him for a due discharge of his office, hints of which may be gathered from *chap.* i. 3. and 2 *Epist.* i. 13. and iii. 16,—14.; yet to fix things more upon his mind, and give him an opportunity of having recourse to them afterwards, and of communicating them to others, as there might be occasion, either at *Ephesus*, where it is most generally supposed *Timothy* then was, or wherever he might go to fulfil his itinerant work; as also to leave divine directions, in writing, for the use of the church and its ministers, in all succeeding ages, he sent him this excellent pastoral letter, which contains a great variety of important sentiments for their regulation; and is supposed by some to have been written about the year of our Lord 55, and by others 58: And about nine or

ten years afterwards, as some think, he followed it with the *Second Epistle*, which still more immediately and chiefly related to *Timothy* himself, and to his own personal ministry and conduct.

The time when, the place from which, and the person by whom, this Epistle was sent, are indeed variously conjectured by learned enquirers into antiquity, while they all agree in its divine authority, and its being written by the apostle *Paul*.

This sacred writer, after his usual declaration of his apostolic character, and affectionate salutation of *Timothy*, lays before him his duty of guarding against those judaizing teachers at *Ephesus*, or elsewhere, that taught any thing contrary to the sound doctrine, which he himself had delivered, according to the trust that Christ had committed to him. (*Chap. i.*) And as they adhered to synagogue-worship, and set themselves in opposition to the legality of the power of *Gentile* princes, and treated it with contempt, as though they had no right of dominion over them, he enjoins the offering up of prayers in all places, without distinction, for kings, and all that were in civil authority, and for subjects of all characters, whether they were *Jews* or *Heathens*; and then goes on to direct the behaviour of women, among whom, it seems, there were great indecencies, or extravagancies of dress, and an assuming management in religious assemblies. (*Chap. ii.*) Then he proceeds to a description of the proper qualifications of ordinary bishops or pastors, and of deacons and their wives, with intimations of the course *Timothy* ought to take, as to his own deportment in the church, with regard to such persons, and the whole of his own office, considering the vast importance of that doctrine which he was to preach: (*chap. iii.*) From thence he takes occasion, to add fore-warnings of seducers, that would arise and pervert many, and would issue in a grand apostacy; ordering him to give such notices of them as might fortify the church of Christ against them, and to exercise himself in such exemplary godliness, and attend so entirely to his ministerial work, and to the improvement of his gifts in preaching the true doctrine of Christ, in such a serious, judicious, diligent, grave, and faithful manner, as might raise his youth above contempt, and, through divine grace, might be rendered effectual to the final salvation of his own and his hearers souls. (*Chap. iv.*) Thereupon he directs his conduct towards all persons whether men or women, of every age and station in the church; and solemnly charges him, as in the presence of Christ, to acquit himself with the utmost prudence, caution, and impartiality toward them, in consistence with a due care of his own infirm state of health, and suitable to the circumstances of the people he might have to do with. (*Chap. v.*) And he closes with advice, relating to the duties of servants, and the perverse tendency of any contrary doctrine of corrupt and worldly minded men, who being strangers to the power of godliness, and not contented with a moderate share of the conveniences of this life, run themselves into sin and ruin, through their covetous desires: And in opposition to these, he charges *Timothy* to act up to the dignity of his sacred trust and character, as in the sight and presence of God, and as he would answer it in the great day of Christ; and remonstrates against an abuse of the

riches of this world, and against the false principles of philosophy, that are subversive of the faith of the gospel; concluding all with a benediction, like himself, saying, Grace be with thee. *Amen.* (Chap. vi.)

C H A P. I.

The apostle asserts his office as of divine authority; salutes Timothy and reminds him of the charge he had given him at Ephesus, 1,—4. Of his end therein, and of the design of the Mosaic law, 5,—11. Of his own conversion, and call to the apostleship, 12,—17. and of Timothy's obligation to maintain faith and a good conscience, which Hymeneus and Philetus had put away from them, 18,—20.

TEXT.

PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, *which is our hope;*

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL, who is an apostle of Jesus the true Messiah, (*κατ' ἐκτίτασιν*) according to the authoritative and gracious appointment of God the Father, who is the original contriver and orderer of the whole scheme of salvation; and of Jesus Christ, who is the great Lord and Redeemer, the author, object, and ground of all our hope toward God, in opposition to any dependence on the works of the law for justification; and is the only Mediator, in and through whom, as revealed in us by his Spirit, according to the gospel-discovery of him, we have good hope of eternal glory. (*Col. i. 27.*)

2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 He, who thus asserts his apostolic office, to bind what he is going to write upon the consciences of all that are concerned in it, even I *Paul* send this epistle to you, my dear *Timothy*, who are already fully convinced of my divine authority, and whom I regard with all the tenderness and affection of a father to his own genuine son, as I was the instrument of bringing you to, and establishing you in, the faith of Christ*; and as you are a young man, and a spiritual child of my own likeness, and have faithfully served with me, as a son with a father, in the gospel,

NOTE.

* As the apostle called *Timothy his own genuine son in the faith*; (*υιόσω*) and frequently styled him *his son Timothy*, (*ver. 18. 2 Tim. i. 2. and 1 Cor. iv. 7.*) it seems probable that he had been the instrument of his conversion to the faith of Christ, as the Messiah spoken of in the Old Testament-prophecy, though we have no particular account of it in the short history of the beginning of the apostle's acquaintance with him: For he

commonly speaks of those under this tender appellation, to whom he had been so, as of *Titus* and *Onesimus*, *Tit. i. 4. and Philem. ver. 10.*; and speaks of himself as a spiritual father, and of those as his children whom he had begotten by the gospel, *1 Cor. iv. 14, 15. 2 Cor. xii. 14. Gal. iv. 19. and 1 Thess. ii. 11.* But I do not find that he ever used this appellation with regard to any that were not converted by his ministry.

pel, (*Phil.* ii. 20, 22.) May the divine favour, in all its freeness and fulness, and the divine compassion, in all the variety of its merciful and tender exercises, which you, as a minister, more than private Christians, will need, in a special manner, to support, relieve, encourage, and comfort you under all the temptations, labours, difficulties, and dangers of your station; and to pity and pardon all your failings! (See the note on *Rom.* i. 7.) And may all the blessings of peace, with God and in your own soul, and between you and those among whom you may be cast, together with all manner of prosperity, abound richly toward you from God our Father, as the eternal fountain of all good, and from Christ Jesus our Lord, as the purchaser, and more immediate author and conveyer of it through the merit of his own blood.

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine;

3 As I desired and exhorted you (*παρηκαλεσα*) to continue some time after me at *Ephesus*, when I took my leave of that famous city, and passed into *Macedonia*; (*Acts* xx. 1,—4.) I would now remind you of my design therein, and give you further instruction about it, which is, that you might, in the name, and by the authority of Christ communicated to you by me his apostle, solemnly enjoin some well-known Judaizing Christians there, and in those parts, that they never dare to broach any doctrine different from, much less contrary to, and corrupting of, the simplicity of that which I have faithfully preached, under divine inspiration among them, and wherever I have gone.

4 Neither give heed to fables, and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in faith; *so do.*

4 And you are to charge them, that they never regard, or propagate any fabulous *Jewish* traditions, that are groundless, and destructive of the purity of the gospel; nor attend to the frivolous pretences of this and that particular person to his pedigree, in an uninterrupted line from *Abraham*, or others of the patriarchs*, which lead to useless, intricate, and endless controversies†, and have no good tendency to spiritual edification after a godly sort, such as is approved of God, and has him for its author; nor are at all useful for establishing the doctrines of faith in Christ, or bringing any to believe in him, or building them up on their most holy faith, who have believed through grace.

5 Now

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* These *genealogies*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* observes, were not any of the genealogies in scripture; but their long intricate pedigrees, that they stood upon to prove themselves *Jews*, *Levites*, *priests*, and the like: And to this we may add the genealogy and pedigree of their traditions, which they derived, by a long

line of succession, through the hands of many doctors. (*Vol.* I. p. 308.)

† *Rather than* is observed by critics to be often used, not in a comparative but negative sense, as in *Luke* xviii. 14. *John* iii. 19. and xii. 43. and 2 *Tim.* iii. 4.

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned :

6 From which some, having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling ;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law ; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully ;

5 Now the end, which is aimed at *, and you ought to pursue, in the charge I ordered you to enforce upon judaizing Christians, (*ver. 3.*) in opposition to their fabulous, fruitless, and perplexing disputes, (*ver. 4.*) is to promote a spirit of love toward God and Christ, and one another, as springing from a sanctified heart, and a faithful, pure, and quiet conscience, that is purged from dead works by the blood of Christ ; as also from a principle of sincere faith, without the least hypocrisy. (*ἀνεπακρίτως*)

6 From all which some, as appears by their language and behaviour under a profession of Christianity, having missed the grand mark, (*ἀσχετην*) and wandered from the main scope, to which all doctrines and practices ought to be directed, have turned into a very different and directly contrary course, in vainly talking of things that are altogether unprofitable, and serve only to stir up animosities, strife, and doubtful disputations, like their idle fables and endless genealogies ; (*ver. 4.*)

7 They affecting to set up for doctors and interpreters of the Jewish law, by their corrupt and uncertain traditions, and to impose it upon the Gentiles ; while, at the same time, they, in reality, neither apprehend the true scope and design of that law itself, nor the things which they confidently assert in their false glosses upon it.

8 But those of us, who are enlightened in the knowledge of the gospel, and in the principal tendency and design of the whole Jewish dispensation, are thoroughly convinced of its being a wise and holy institution, as it was appointed of God for answering good purposes, if a regular and proper use be made of it, according to his intention, for bringing us to Christ : (*Gal. iii. 24.*) Even the ceremonial law is of great use, if we consider it as having a typical reference to him, and the gospel-state, in which it is fulfilled by him, and not as to be continued with a perpetual obligation for observing its ritual ordinances, as judaizers vainly imagine and contend for : And as to the moral law, it is in itself of an excellent nature, as holy, just, and good ; and it is still of admirable use to convince us of sin, and of our need of a Saviour,

NOTE.

* The end of the commandment is supposed by some to mean the end of the law, and by others of the gospel ; but it rather seems to me to be most immediately meant of the charge or commandment, which the apostle had directed Timothy, (*ver. 3.*) to give to them who taught other doctrine. Thus he says, I

besought thee to abide at Ephesus, (*ὡς κατέγγειλόντες*) that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other doctrine, and here, answerable to the word there used, it is (*το τέλος της κατεγγειλιας*) the end of the commandment or charge is charity, &c.

our, and is as good and perfect, and of as immutable obligation to be obeyed now, as ever, if it be duly considered and made use of, as a rule of life, and standard of all righteousness to be complied with, not for justification to life, as those false teachers would persuade us, but upon evangelical principles of faith and love, in a conscientious discharge of every duty that is owing to God, our neighbour, and ourselves, that he may be glorified thereby.

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers, for

9 And we are at the same time fully satisfied, that the *moral* law, as still continuing in force, and made the law of Christ's kingdom under the gospel-state, is not designed to condemn, nor does its damnatory sentence lie against (*ἐναντίον*) a true believer in Christ, who is justified through faith in him, and who, from a principle of faith, has an impartial respect to all its commands*; but it is made with its sanction, and stands in force for the condemnation of impenitent and unbelieving transgressors, and of those that will not be subject to the authority of God in it; such as are impious wretches, that have not the fear of God in their hearts, and wilfully turn aside from his holy commandments, and that worship false gods, like the idolatrous *Gentiles*; and such as are destitute of all true holiness, and are contemners of God and religion; and such as do not stick at the horrible sin of parricide, or of murdering their parents, whether fathers or mothers; and would maliciously destroy the life of any man whatsoever;

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be

10 It is also in force for the condemnation of such as are guilty of fornication or adultery, (*πορνείας*) or of any unlawful familiarity between persons of a different sex; and such as are chargeable with the unnatural and detestable sin of sodomy; such as venture to steal men, that they may either use, or sell them for slaves; such as addict themselves to lies in common

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* The law is not made for a righteous man evidently relates to its not being made to condemn him; because it really is made for such an one, as well as others, to be the rule of his obedience, and to restrain him for transgressing it: But since there is no man, that lives and sins not, the righteous man, whom it is not made to condemn, is to be understood of one that is righteous in the eye of the law through the righteousness of Christ received by faith: And that the *moral* law is here intended, appears from the nature of the crimes specified, as subjecting persons to condemnation by it, which are manifestly such as were for-

bidden in the law of the ten commandments, and may be reduced to one or other of its precepts. (See Dr. Whitby's note.) And as the 9th and 10th verses most obviously speak of the *same* law, though in the 9th verse it is put *with* the article in the *Greek*, and in the 10th *without* it, here Mr. Locke's criticism on the word *law*, (*νομος*) as having a different meaning, when used with and without the article, seems to fail, as it does in several other places: Nor is it always attended to by that learned gentleman himself, according to what we have observed in the note on *Rom. iii. 19.*

be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief:

common conversation; such as perjure themselves in courts of judicature; and such as go into any other sort of wickedness, in heart and life, that is contrary to the pure and wholesome doctrine of divine revelation, besides these that have been specified: All such persons are condemned by the righteous law of God, which severely forbids every kind of iniquity.

11 Their crimes are equally contrary to, and condemned by, the holy nature, design, and obligation of the gospel, which illustriously displays the glorious perfections, counsels, and operations of the ever blessed God, who has an infinite satisfaction and delight in and of himself, immutably without beginning, alteration, or end, and is the fountain of all happiness to others, by means of, and according to the tenor of this most excellent gospel, which is a *doctrine according to godliness*, (chap. vi. 3.) and is glorious in its whole scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ, and in its happy and holy effects on them that believe; (*Rom. i. 16.*) and which I have been intrusted with, by divine revelation and commission, as a precious and sacred depositum to be faithfully preserved, and dispensed wherever I come.

12 And while I think of the high honour of this important trust, I cannot but, from the very bottom of my soul, bless the name of Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, Lord, and King, and give vent to the grateful glowing sentiments of my heart, in all ascriptions of praise to him, who has qualified, authorised, and strengthened me (*ἐνδυνάμωσάρι*) for this eminent service; inasmuch that, having formed me for himself, he was pleased to make account of me, as a faithful servant; and so called me to, and vested me in the apostolic office, to minister the gospel of his grace.

13 Even me, the unlikeliest and unworthiest of all others, considering that, till his grace reached and turned my heart, I was a furious blasphemer of his divine person and sacred doctrine; and an outrageous persecutor of his members, even unto imprisonment and death; and a most injurious reviler, (*ὕβρις*) of his name, people, and interest. (*Acts ix. 1, 2. and Luke xxiii. 34.*) But, notwithstanding all these complicated, incensing provocations, I, O sweetly-amazing thought! found forgiving mercy, there being just room left for it, according to the extensive declarations of pardoning grace, and Christ's prayer for ignorant offenders; (*Mat. xii. 31. and Luke xxiii. 34.*) * be-
cause

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* It is not to be supposed that the apostle, by saying *because I did it ignorantly and in unbelief*, meant that his ignorance and unbelief were deserving

cause I did all this, not under a conviction of his being the true Messiah, and with desperate malicious enmity to him, as such, in defiance of that conviction: No, on the other hand, *I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus;* (Acts xxvi. 9.) and so all was the effect of blind, though very unreasonable and criminal prejudices against him, and of rash, mad, and misguided zeal, under the power of unbelief.

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14 And the free favour of our gracious and compassionate Lord was so amazingly great to such an obstinate self-deluding wretch as I was, that (*υπερβαλλωντος*) it superabounded toward me, far beyond what is usual, or could be expected, or can be fully estimated, or conceived of, in working effectual faith in my heart, who was before so perverse and resolute an unbeliever; and in producing a cordial affectionate love in my soul to himself, and delight in him, as the anointed Saviour, and in his people and cause, though I was before so violent and injurious an enemy to, and persecutor of him and them.

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

15 What adds greatly to the pleasure of my reflections on this exceeding abundant grace toward myself is, that here is a wide door opened for the very worst of sinners; in love to whose souls, I now as passionately long for their happiness, as I before opposed it: I can now assure them from my own good experience, as well as from the whole tenor of the gospel-revelation, that its grand summary article may be firmly depended upon, as divinely true and faithful, and is every way worthy to be universally, believingly, and affectionately embraced by all, whether greater or lesser sinners that hear it, as it consists in this joyful, nearly concerning, and best of all other declarations, *viz.* That the great end and design of Christ's assuming human nature in his incarnation, and coming into this lower world, under the character of a Saviour, to fulfil the law, suffer and die in the room and stead of sinners, was, that he might deliver them from sin and wrath through faith in him, whether

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or were a proper cause of his obtaining mercy: For it would be strange indeed to imagine, that there were any merit in an ignorance, which was owing to a wilful rejection of the clearest means of knowledge; and in unbelief, which is itself a heinous sin, with an entail of damnation upon it, under the light of the gospel; accordingly the apostle in the next words speaks with high admiration of the *grace of the Lord Jesus, as*

exceeding abundant towards him, who considered himself as the chief of sinners: But his ignorance and unbelief did not shut him out of the sphere of mercy, as it left him a capable subject of it, according to the grace of the gospel; whereas, had his blasphemy and persecutions been maliciously practised, contrary to his knowledge and belief of Christ's being the true Messiah, they would have amounted to the unpardonable sin.

ther they be idolatrous *Gentiles*, or blind, prejudiced, and persecuting *Jews*, like what I myself was; and might bring them to that salvation, which is in him, with eternal glory: A greater proof, and more encouraging instance of which, can scarce be imagined, than has appeared in me, who have been indeed the most notorious, first-rate sinner, exceeding all others in my malignant blasphemy of Christ, and persecution of his members.

16 Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

16 But (*αλλὰ*) still further to encourage all sorts of sinners to believe in Christ for the remission of sins, how great or many soever they have been, I must add, that this astonishing instance of free, sovereign, and abounding grace toward me, was designed, not merely for the salvation of my own soul: But Infinite Wisdom ordered it likewise with a view to the salvation of others, to whom I am appointed to preach these glad tidings, that in me first of all *, and as the chief of sinners, the gracious and compassionate Saviour might exercise all forbearance and patience, while I was, for a long while, amidst the light of the gospel, going on in the high road of rebellion against him; and that he might set me forth, as the most remarkable sample of what rich grace they may warrantably hope to find in him, who, after all their opposition to him, shall be brought, under an affecting humbling sense of their guilt and danger, (as I was) to put their trust alone in him for the pardon of sin, acceptance with God, and safe conduct to eternal life.

17 Now unto the king eternal, immortal,

17 Now, in reflection on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ †, to whom I have made my religious grateful

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* Here seems to be a direct reference back to what the apostle said of himself, ver. 15. of whom I am chief, (*ὡς πρῶτος ἐν ἡμῖν ὢν*) and here he says in me first, or the chief. (*ὡς ἡμῶν πρῶτος*.)

† As Christ Jesus our Lord, I apprehend, is the only subject spoken of, and all along mentioned in the five preceding verses, the connection carries this lofty ascription of glory most immediately to him, considered as God; and as the apostle (ver. 1, 12, 12.) had equally joined God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him his divine and apostolic commission, and had equally wished grace, mercy, and peace to Timothy from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, (ver. 2.) and as he (ver. 12.) went into the most religious thanksgivings to Christ for putting him into the ministry; it seems most natural to understand him, as closing the account of what Christ had therein done for him,

with a doxology to him; and if, as some suppose, the king eternal signifies the king of ages, (*βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων*) meaning the patriarchal, *Mosaic*, and evangelical ages, with what great propriety may Christ be considered, as that king, who often appeared as the great Jehovah, that ordered and governed the two former, as well as chiefly acts, as king of the church, in the last of these dispensations? Nor is it any just objection to this doxology's being offered to Christ, that the like, as some think, is presented to God the Father, chap. vi. 15, 16.; (see the note there) since the divine titles, and essential characters of Godhead are frequently ascribed to the Father and the Son, to show that they, in nature and divine properties, are one God, in distinction from all other pretended deities, though in other places they are personally distinguished from each other: Nor is it any greater objection

mortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

grateful acknowledgments for having put me into the ministry, (*ver. 12.*) I solemnly ascribe all honour and glory to him, as the sovereign Lord and Governor of the whole creation, who is from everlasting to everlasting the incorruptible God; invisible, as to his divine nature; the only being, inclusive of the Father and Spirit, that is possessed of infinitely perfect wisdom, originally and essentially in himself, and is the giver of all wisdom to others, and makes them wise unto salvation that believe in him: May he be magnified and adored in the loftiest strains, from henceforth through all succeeding time, and to an endless eternity! *Amen.* So let it be, so it ought to be, and so it will be among those that know and love him.

18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare,

18 The charge, by which I have ordered you, my dear son *Timothy*, to remonstrate with all authority against those that would teach any other doctrine, than you have received, * (*ver. 3, 4, 5.*) and which I commit, as a sacred trust to you, from whom there are justly great expectations of eminent service, according to the intimations which the Holy Ghost had given by some New Testament-prophets, before you entered on your office, as a person marked out for it, and to be remarkably endowed with superior extraordinary gifts, and miraculous powers, for fulfilling it; which I now remind you of, that, in reflection upon these things, you may be the more excited to act the part of a faithful, diligent, and courageous soldier of Jesus Christ, in fighting his battles, under him, against sin, Satan, and the world, and in standing up valiantly for the truth against all opposition.

19 Holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck:

19 In which, as ever you would acquit yourself with honour and advantage, and as becomes your character and function, it concerns you to be steadfast in the faith of the gospel, to hold it fast, and to hold it forth in your ministry; and to keep a *conscience void of offence toward God and man*, (*Acts xxiv. 16.*) that you may be upright and faithful in preaching it, and living answerable to it, which some professors

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objection (as I humbly apprehend) against applying that part of this description of God to our Lord Jesus Christ, in which he is said to be *invisible*; since this relates, not to his human nature and office-appearances under the Old and New Testament-dispensations; but to his *divine nature*, considered under the formal notion of him, as *God*. However, in this view of him, the Father is no more excluded from this doxology

than the Son is, were we to understand it as an ascription of glory to God the Father: But admitting that this was directed to Christ, it is as lofty an ascription of glory and honour to him as is any where made to the Father himself.

* Several expositors have thought that this verse is to be connected with *ver. 5.*; and that all the others, which come between, are to be considered as a parenthesis.

fessors of Christ's name, having rejected * and paid no regard to, have thereupon (as is always to be expected in such cases) renounced the doctrine of faith itself, which they before professed, to their own danger, loss, and damage, like one that suffers to the greatest extremity by a shipwreck.

20 Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

20 Of this sort of apostates there are two remarkably infamous ringleaders, whom I think myself obliged to point out, that you and all Christians may beware of them, and bear a public testimony against them; they are *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, † who were so notorious for subverting the faith and holiness of the gospel, and for broaching their horrible errors, and practising abominable immoralities, that I was under a necessity of exercising the apostolic rod, which Christ has given me, by delivering them up to the power of Satan to inflict punishments upon them in body, or soul, or both, that, by means of so severe a discipline, they might be brought to a conviction of the evil of their hearts and lives; and, by feeling the dreadful consequence of their crimes, might be afraid of persisting in their blasphemous defamations of the name, doctrines, and ways of the Lord. (See the notes on 1 Cor. iv. 21. and 2 Cor. x. 6.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How solemn and important, honourable and delightful, is the trust that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ have committed to gospel-ministers! How thankful should they be for it; and desirous of abundance of grace and mercy from these divine persons, to help, pity, and prosper them, that they may be supported under their numerous trials from without and from within, and enabled to be faithful in their Lord's work, according to the qualifications he has given them, and all reasonable expectations from them! They may indeed meet with many virulent and subtle adversaries; some furious persecutors, like *Paul* before his conversion; others apostates, like *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*; and others, that would introduce fabulous traditions, strange doctrines, doubtful disputations, and vain janglings, to the overthrowing of the faith of many nominal professors, instead of promoting spiritual edification: But as all such are to be shunned and rejected, while real converts are to be affectionately loved, as genuine children in the faith, with what

N O T E S.

* *Some having put away (ἀποστειναι) faith and a good conscience, can by no means prove, that they ever had them before, as some contend: For the word here used properly signifies to reject, or repel, as in Acts vii. 27. where it is said, that he that did his neighbour wrong thrust Moses away (ἀπέσταν) saying, Who made thee a ruler and judge over us? And at other times it is used to signify only a rejecting of what was proposed to persons for their acceptance; as when the Israelites would not obey Moses, but thrust him from them; (ἀπέσταν) Acts vii. 39. and when the apostle, speaking of the gospel, said to the Jews,*

Seeing you put it from you, (ἀποστειναι) lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

† *Hymeneus* was, in all likelihood, the same that is spoken of, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. as a pernicious man, who denied the doctrine of the resurrection, and overthrew the faith of some: And *Alexander* seems to have been the copper-smith, mentioned, 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15. as having done the apostle much evil, and greatly withstood his words; and was probably that *Alexander* whom the Jews stirred up to declaim against *Paul*, and fix an odium upon him, in the uproar at Ephesus. (See the paraphrase and notes on Acts xix. 33.)

what courage may the servants of Christ stand to their charge, in which they are called to war a good warfare ! And with what pleasure may they recommend the glorious gospel of the blessed God, in hope that the like grace may be extended to other sinners, for working faith and love in them, by means of their preaching it, as has been shewn to themselves ! For they well know, and can assure all about them, on the credit of a divine testimony, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners. O wondrous superabounding grace ! It turns the hearts, and pardons the sins of blasphemers, persecutors, and injurious persons, and frees them from the condemnation of the law, which does not stand in force against those that are made righteous through faith in Christ, but only against obstinate, impenitent, and unbelieving sinners, that persist in ungodliness and immoralities of various kinds, which are forbidden by the good and holy law of God, and are equally contrary to the sound doctrine of the gospel. But how should sinners tremble at the thought of continuing to oppose and reject the gospel, and making a wrong use of the law ! And how solicitous should preachers and hearers be, that they may live under the power of evangelical love, as proceeding from a sanctified heart ; and that unfeigned faith and a good conscience may be always preserved together, lest, by violating conscience, they soon make shipwreck of faith ! And with what gratitude and praise should all, that are experimentally acquainted with Christ, according to the gospel revelation of him, unite their adorations of him, together with the Father and Spirit, as he in his divine nature is, inseparably from them, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God ! To whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

C H A P. II.

The apostle orders prayers to be made every where for all sorts of persons, heathens and their magistrates, as well as others, since the grace of the gospel makes no difference of ranks or nations, 1,—8. And shews how women ought to behave in civil and religious life, 9,—15.

TEXT.

I Exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men ;

PARAPHRASE.

AS the prejudices of the judaizing Christians are so strong against the *Gentiles*, and some among them reject the authority of heathen magistrates, I therefore, suitable to my character, as the apostle of the *Gentiles*, do in the first place exhort, that in every Christian assembly, and in family and secret worship, all manner of addresses, in a way of deprecation of evils, and of petitions and pleas for all needful mercies, and in a way of thanksgiving and praise for mercies received, be offered up to God, through Christ, for men of all sorts, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, and of all ranks and degrees, whether in higher or lower stations.

² For kings, and for all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

2 That they be made for civil magistrates, though heathens ; such as bear the title of emperors or kings, or as are in high places of dignity and authority under them, or under any form of government whatsoever, that their persons and administrations may be blessed, and they may rule in the fear of God, as *Israel* were to pray for heathen kings, and the peace

of

of the cities, where they were carried captive : (*Ezra* vi. 10. and *Jer.* xxix. 7.) And I, as an apostle of a still more benevolent and extensively gracious dispensation, now exhort, that prayers be likewise offered for all sorts of subjects, that we, who are such, may, under the protection of the civil government, and according to God's design in appointing it for the good of the community, live, and pass our time, and transact our affairs, (*διαγορευ*) with safety and peace, secure from all outrages and violence, public or private, to ourselves and families, or to our civil and religious rights and privileges ; and with a tranquillity, that may be subservient to, and exemplified in, all acts of piety toward God, and of moral honesty, virtue, and honourable conversation toward men of every character.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour ;

3 For thus to pray, and thus to live, is in itself fit and right, and every way becoming Christians ; and, as such, is agreeable to the good and holy nature and will of God, and well-pleasing in his sight through Christ, who has made himself known under the endearing character of God your Saviour and mine, together with all that believe, of what rank or nation soever ; there being now no difference, as to this, in his account.

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

4 Who, according to the good pleasure of his will, (*Ephes.* i. 5, 9.) for the more illustrious display of the freeness, sovereignty, variety, and abundant riches of his grace under the gospel-dispensation, intends effectually to save all sorts of men, whether kings or subjects ; high or low, greater or lesser sinners, *Jews* or *Gentiles* * ; and, in order hereunto, determines that

N O T E.

* *All men* here, and *all* in verse 6, cannot, without the greatest inattention to the whole scope of the context, be made to signify all and every individual of mankind, and so construed into a proof of universal redemption and salvation : For as these and such like universal terms are often used in a restrained and distributive sense ; (see the note on *2 Cor.* v. 17.) so all along in the preceding verses, which speak of *praying for all men, for kings, &c.* and which these verses refer to, as arguments to enforce it against the prejudices of the *Jews*, who despised the *Gentiles*, and their rulers, it is plain, that by *all men* is meant *all sorts of men*, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *kings* or *subjects*. To suppose it to signify every individual of mankind, can scarce be reconciled with the apostle *John's* saying, (*1 John* v. 16.)

There is a sin unto death, I do not say that ye shall pray for it, that is, for those who evidently appear to have been guilty of the unpardonable sin ; much less are *thanks* to be offered for such, and all the wicked of the earth. But the *all men*, whom God will have to be saved, are those only, whom he will have to be brought to the knowledge of the truth, which cannot be said of all mankind, universally without exception ; since a great part of the world neither are, nor ever were enlightened with the knowledge of the gospel itself. But a great number of both *Jews* and *Gentiles* of various nations, and some of all ranks and orders of people, have been not only favoured with the gospel, but also savingly taught to know the truth, as it is in *Jesus* : And of *this* all it is said, *Christ gave himself a ransom for them*, ver. 6.

that the gospel shall be published to every creature, (*Mark* xvi. 15. see the note there) that sinners of every nation may be brought to a saving acquaintance with its important truths, relating to the way of pardon and eternal life, through Jesus Christ, in whom alone there is salvation for them. (*Acts* iv. 12.)

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:

5 For though he was formerly, in a peculiar and restrained sense, the God of the Jews, there is now, according to ancient prophecies, (*Zech.* xiv. 9.) one and the same God to them, and to the Gentiles also, seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith: (*Rom.* iii. 29, 30.) And though the Gentiles have set up many mediators to pacify, and intercede with their superior gods; and though Moses and the high priests under the law were a sort of mediators between God and the people of Israel, and them only*; yet there is now one and the same, and only one Mediator of reconciliation and intercession between God, and men of all nations, who were at variance with him by reason of sin; even the great and glorious, yea, divine man, Jesus Christ, who assumed human nature into personal union with himself, as the Son of God; and so was truly man, as well as God, and thereby completely fitted for, and accordingly performed the office of an interposing Saviour between both the offended and offending parties, God and man; the nature and interest of both being united in him: It is therefore highly proper, that prayers and praises should be offered up to God for all sorts of men through him, in whom all nations shall be blessed.

6 Who gave himself a ransom for

6 Who being Lord of his own life, (*John* x. 18.) and having an infinite dignity in his person as God-man,

N O T E S.

as the procuring cause of their being brought to the knowledge of the truth, and eternally saved by that means, according to the will of God: And to suppose that God really willed the illumination and salvation, which he never effected, and the means of which he never granted, is to defeat the counsel of his will, who works all things according to it, (*Eph.* i. 11.) in ways that are suitable to the different make of his creatures in the moral, as well as in the natural world, without any force upon the free and rational faculties of mankind; and he hath said, with respect to the government of their affairs, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* (*Isa.* xlv. 10.)

ken of as mediator between God and men, is no more an argument against his being also God, in the discharge of that office, than its being at other times said, that the Lord of glory was crucified, and God purchased the church with his own blood, (*1 Cor.* ii. 8. and *Acts* ii. 28.) is an argument against his being man, in his sufferings and bloodshed; and as he is expressly called the one Mediator, this must exclude all others, such as saints and angels, which the Papists set up, and idolatrously worship as their mediators, in like manner as the Gentiles had formerly set up many mediators, to pacify and intercede with their superior gods. (See Mr. Joseph Mede's works, pag. 772, &c.)

* Christ's being styled man, when spo-

for all, to be testified in due time.

man, freely offered up himself, soul and body, an atoning sacrifice to God, and laid down his life, as a price of redemption, (*ανταγωγη*) or as a ransom paid to divine justice, by his suffering in the room and stead of many, (*Ματθ. xx. 28.*) to deliver them from the bondage of sin, Satan, the law, and death, (see the note on *ver. 4.*) even vast multitudes, which no man can number, of all nations, ranks, and degrees, whom he redeemed from among men; (*Rev. v. 9. and vii. 9.*) a testimony to which was given by the former prophets in their days, (*1 Pet. i. 10, 11.*) and was to be still more clearly given, as it now is, under the New Testament-dispensation, by preaching the gospel in its proper season, first to the *Jews*, and afterwards to the *Gentiles*. (*Rom. i. 16.*)

7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

7 Unto the publishing of which gospel, I am appointed, and authorised of God, to be, as it were, a herald, (*αγγελος*) and an apostle, with an extensive commission to proclaim it, without restriction to the *Jews*; (whatsoever those of the circumcision may think, I solemnly declare, and appeal to Christ, as a believer in him, and as in his omniscient presence, who is witness to what I say, that I herein speak, with the strictest veracity, without the least prevarication) I am in a special manner ordained of God to be a preacher, particularly to the *Gentiles*, of the faith and truth, or true faith of the gospel, that his will, for saving purposes, may be made known to them by me, with all faithfulness and sincerity.

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

8 I therefore, according to this divine commission toward the *Gentiles*, insist upon it, as in the name of my great Lord and Master, that Christians, and particularly men, that are the peoples mouth to God, pray for all the fore-mentioned sorts of persons, not with a confinement to the temple, and *Jewish* synagogues, but in every place, as there may be opportunity and convenience for it; one being no more holy now, than another: (*John iv. 21,—24.*) And this ought to be done with fervour, purity, and elevation of heart to God, in token of which holy men have used to lift up their hands in their sacred devotions, without a wrathful temper, like that which discovers itself in the malice and indignation of the *Jews* against the *Gentiles*; and without doubting whether God will hear the prayer of faith, or whether he will be gracious in saving *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, that believe in Christ; and without reasoning and disputing against it. (*διαλογισμους*)

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves

9 I also alike insist upon it, that women appear, as at all times, so especially at religious assemblies, neat and decent in a garb suitable to the modesty of their

selves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

11 Let the women learn in silence, with all subjection.

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

of their sex, (*κατα αιδος και σωφροσυνης*) with an air of reverence of God and of sacred things, and in a prudent, sober manner; not adorning themselves * with curiously curled and plaited hair, after the manner of lewd women, or with gay and showy deckings of gold and precious stones, or any rich and gaudy apparel, (1 *Pet.* iii. 3.) which, when they are fond of them, and excessive in them beyond their circumstances, discover pride and vanity of heart, and a greater solicitude of appearing before men than before God.

10 But (as is most decent and honourable for religious women, that make a profession of piety, and of a supreme regard to the things of another world) their chief concern should be to put on the shining ornaments of such graces, practices and performances, as are good in themselves, conformable to the holy law of God, and of great price in his sight, and useful to others.

11 According to the becoming modesty, with which women ought to behave in church-assemblies, let them listen to public ministrations with meekness and silence, and in due subjection to the superior characters of their husbands, and the ministers, of whom they are to learn the things of God.

12 But I by no means permit †, that the woman should take upon her publicly to preach in the church; (see the notes on 1 *Cor.* xi. 3. and xiv. 34.) nor do I allow that, under any pretence whatsoever, she assume an authority to herself that betokens a superiority to the man: But I insist upon it, that, in all religious assemblies, she, suitable to the order of her sex,

NOTES.

* The *adornings* condemned here, and 1 *Pet.* iii. 4. are such as were overcurious, and extravagant, rich and costly, above the rank, station and ability of those that wore them, and as tended to puff up the pride, levity and vanity of their own hearts, and to entice others to wantonness, by those ways of decking themselves; and they seem to be such adornings, as were chiefly, if not entirely, used as the attire of harlots. (See Dr. Whitby's note here, and on 1 *Pet.* iii. 4.) But that some adornings are lawful on proper occasions, according to peoples different stations, is evident from their having been worn by *Rebecca* and *Queen Esther*, Gen. xxiv. 22, 30. and *Esth.* v. 1. and from the allusions that are made to them, with approbation, in setting forth the beauty and glory of the church. *Psal.* xlv. 9, 13. *Isa.* lxi. 10. and *Ezek.* xvi. 10.—14, 16. The caution therefore against these sorts of adornings, either

relates to those that were some way excessive, fantastical, luxurious, or indecent; or else to an *affellation* of outward dress, rather than the brighter ornaments of virtue, modesty, and chastity, piety, holiness, and good works, (*chap.* v. 10.) as those forms of expression are sometimes to be understood, not in an absolutely negative, but *comparative* sense. (See *Exod.* xvi. 8. *Joel* ii. 13. and *Luke* xiv. 12, 13.)

† The *teaching* here forbid to the woman relates to *public preaching*; but does not exclude her from engaging in private family-instruction of children, or others, either by herself or with her husband, as *Timothy's* mother and grandmother most probably taught him the knowledge of the holy scriptures, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15; and as *Priscilla* joined with *Aquila* in privately expounding the way of God to *Apollos*, Acts xviii. 26.

sex, behave with a meek and silent subjection to him; and the reason of this is founded in the original law of nature, and in the state of things immediately after the fall.

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

13 For *Adam*, the common father of all mankind, was brought into being by the great Creator before his wife *Eve*, who was made out of one of his ribs, (*Gen. ii. 21.*) which intimates, that *the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man*, (*1 Cor. xi. 9.*) and that, by consequence, she ought to be in proper subjection to him.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

14 And as to the ruin that is brought upon mankind by the fall, it was not *Adam* that was deceived, and drawn into sin, by the immediate stratagem of the serpent; but *Eve*, his wife, being imposed upon by that subtle adversary, was the first of them that went into the transgression of the law of God, which forbade their eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death; and she was the means of her husband's doing the same, (*Gen. iii. 1,—6, 12, 13.*) without his own being seduced by the serpent himself, and (which indeed aggravated his sin) without any deception, but knowingly, as induced to it by his fond affection to his wife.

15 Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith and charity, and holiness with sobriety.

15 However, the female sex * shall be so far relieved against the righteous sentence upon the first woman, (*Gen. iii. 16.*) that they shall be carried through the sorrows of child-bearing, sometimes with safety, and always with freedom from them as a curse; and shall certainly be saved with an everlasting salvation, in case they prove themselves to be real Christians, by continuing in the exercise of faith and trust in God through Christ, the promised seed; and, as the fruit of their faith, in love to God and his people; and in all conjugal chastity and holiness of heart and life, together with a due moderation of their passions and appetites, and a sober behaviour, as becomes women professing godliness, which *has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* (*Chap. iv. 8.*)

RECollections.

How abundantly more extensive is the grace of God under the gospel-dispensation, than it was in the *Jewish* ages! He intends the salvation of all sorts of persons,

NOTE.

* *She shall be saved*, cannot relate personally to *Eve*, who was dead long before, whereas this is a promise for time to come: And therefore I take it to relate to *women in general*, that were involved with her in the sentence pronounced, *Gen. iii. 16.*; and so *she* is a

noun of multitude, including the whole sex; accordingly, by an analogy of number, frequent in such cases, it is expressed, in the latter part of this verse, by *their* continuing in faith, &c. (See Dr. *Whitby's* note.)

sons, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, high or low, greater or lesser sinners; and accordingly will bring in multitudes of them to the saving knowledge of Christ, who is the only Mediator between the offended God and offending men, and freely gave himself up to death, as a price of redemption to satisfy divine justice for all of every character that shall believe in him, and to deliver them from sin, and from the wrath to come. What a blessed and encouraging ground of hope, and of prayer, is here, for kings and subjects, that by means of a gospel-ministry, which Christ has appointed to testify his atoning death, they may be brought to know and believe in him, though at present they be strangers and enemies to him! And how pleasing to God is it, that Christian subjects, on all occasions, and whenever they are engaged in divine worship, without regard to any distinction of places, be importunate in prayer, and hearty in thankgivings for their political governors, as they are ordained of God for the good of the community, that, under their protection and favour, they may live in quiet possession of their religious and civil rights, and have full liberty for the discharge of all moral and Christian duties! Women, as well as men, are to join in public worship, and to behave with decency, like persons professing godliness: They ought not to be fond of decking themselves with splendid attire, nor set their hearts upon fine and sumptuous dress, but upon the richer and brighter ornaments of virtue and grace, and abounding in every good work: And remembering the rank in which God has placed their sex by the law of creation, and after the fall, in which the woman was first in the transgression, they should take heed of every thing that looks like an affectation of superiority to the man, and be silent learners with due subjection, and not preachers in the church: And as ever they would be comforted under the dismal effects of the fall, and be carried safe through the sorrows and dangers of child-bearing, and get at last to heaven, it behoves them to live in an exercise of faith and love, chastity, holiness, and sobriety: For, blessed be God! here is a gracious promise of rich mercy to such.

C H A P. III.

The apostle describes what ought to be the qualifications and behaviour of gospel-bishops, 1,—7. And of deacons and their wives, 8,—13. And gives Timothy a reason of his writing so particularly to him about these, and other church-affairs, for directing his own conduct as an evangelist, 14,—16.

TEXT.

THIS is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

PARAPHRASE.

TO proceed to some other directions, that may be needful for you, my son *Timothy*, to be acquainted with, in order to a due discharge of your trust, as an evangelist; it is certainly true, and may well be said, that if any Christian, properly qualified, is inclined, with a view to the glory of God and the good of souls, to enter upon the office of a pastor, or overseer of God's flock, to perform the part of a bishop in the oversight of it, (see the notes on *Acts* xx. 28. and *1 Pet.* v. 2.) he aims at a very important, honourable, and useful, though laborious post and service: But that you and such may know, and the church may judge, and not be imposed upon, it is proper to draw out some account of what sort of qualifications are needful for a faithful and acceptable discharge of the duties of such a high and laborious station.

2. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach :

3. Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous.

3. Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous.

2. A bishop, or pastor, then, ought to be an inoffensive man, of an unexceptionable moral character, in every relation of life, *that the ministry be not blamed*; (2 Cor. vi. 3.) and, if he be not a single man*, he ought by no means to have any more than one wife at a time; no, nor on any account, except in case of adultery, to divorce his wife, and marry another, whilst she is living: (Mat. xxi. 32.) He ought also to be very circumspect and diligent in his work, watchful against Satan and all his instruments, and watchful over his own spirit, words, and actions, and for the souls of those that are committed to his charge; and to be very moderate in his appetites, passions, and pleasures; to be affable, courteous, prudent, and engaging in the general course of his conversation towards all men; and to be of a generous soul, ready, according to his ability, to relieve the necessities of the poor†, and entertain godly strangers, ministers, or others, that are well recommended to him; and he should be well furnished with a good stock of Christian knowledge and experience, and capable of expressing his sentiments with freedom, clearness, and propriety, for the instruction of others, and for supporting and defending the truths of the gospel on all suitable occasions; as also to be ready to improve all proper opportunities for it.

3. He ought by no means to be a wine-bibber, (Mat. xi. 19.) or a lover of strong drink to any excess; nor to be a man of a quarrelsome and furious temper, like one whose passions are too strong, upon provocation, to keep his tongue from grievous scurrility, or his hands from violence; nor ought he to be eagerly fond of the riches of this world, which are defiling gains, especially to one of his character, when procured by any base unworthy means: But he should be one of a meek, calm, peaceable, and forbearing spirit, (2 Tim. ii. 24.) not abusive, noisy, and clamorous in his way of talking and disputing; nor so in love with the things of this world, as to prefer

NOTES.

* *The husband of one wife*, neither means that a bishop or pastor is obliged to marry, nor that he ought never to marry a second wife, the prohibition of which would be contrary to natural rights, and the design of the law of marriage itself; neither of which was ever intended to be set aside by the gospel-dispensation: But it is designed to guard against polygamy, and against divorces on frivolous occasions, both which were frequent among the Jews, but condemned by our Lord, Matth. xix. 3, 9; and there-

fore ministers, of all others, ought to stand clear of either of those sins.

† *A lover of hospitality*, properly signifies a friend to strangers; (φιλόξενος) and as *inns* for public entertainment were not very usual in those days, it was a becoming part of the character of bishops to be open-hearted to poor Christians, that were strangers, especially to such as were driven into their neighbourhoods by persecutions, and to ministers that went about from place to place to preach the gospel.

prefer the fleece to the flock, and to seek *abeirs*, rather than *them*. (2 Cor. xii. 14.)

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; he ought to keep up good discipline and decorum in his house, and maintain a prudent authority over his children, as well as servants, to oblige them, like *Abraham*, (Gen. xviii. 19.) to submit to regular orders, both with regard to religion and manners, as may be most honourable and comely for him and them.

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 5 For if a man have the charge of a family, whose affairs are more easy to be managed, and of less consequence, and does not know how to govern it well, as becomes the master of his own house; how can it reasonably be expected, that he should have prudence, care, and resolution enough, to preside in the management of the higher and more difficult affairs of the church of the living God, (*ver.* 15.) in which all things are to be done decently and in order, exactly according to his Lord's appointment? (1 Cor. xiv. 40. see the note there.)

6 Not a novice, left, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 6 He ought not to be a raw upstart, nor, ordinarily, one that is but newly converted to the faith of Christ, and planted in his church; (*novus*) left being puffed up with a high conceit of his gifts and smattering knowledge, (which has more heat than light) or with popular applause, or with the honour of being so soon advanced to such an eminent station in the church, he, through the instigation of Satan, fall into the same condemnation, and by means of the same pride, as the devil himself did, when, not contented with his station among the glorious angels, *he left his first habitation*, and is thereupon reserved in everlasting chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. (Jude, *ver.* 6.)

7 Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; left he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil. 7 Once more, He ought to be a man of clear reputation, not only with Christians themselves, but also among unbelievers, whether *Jeros* or Heathens, that are out of the pale of the church, and watch for the halting of gospel-professors, and especially of gospel-ministers; left he give too great occasion for reproach upon himself, and upon the name, doctrine, and ways of the Lord; and so the devil catch an advantage against him, to the injury of his own soul, and of his usefulness; and to the discredit of religion, the triumph of its adversaries; and the grief and stumbling of young converts.

8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to

They

to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre,

They likewise, as to their *moral* character, ought to be (*οἰκονομοί*) men of a grave, decent, and venerable behaviour, and of good report; (*Acts* vi. 3.) not given to dissimulation, speaking one thing and meaning another, or carrying two faces, and talking at one time contrary to what they say at another, as may best serve a turn; nor ought they to indulge themselves in drinking too freely of any strong liquors, which would not only be a reproach upon their characters, but render them very unfit for the duties of their office; nor ought they to be of an avaricious temper, that would slacken their hands to the poor, and be a temptation to act the part of unfaithful stewards, in privately appropriating some of the church's stock to their own use.

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

9 As to their *religious* character, they ought to be sound in the faith, stedfastly adhering to, and persevering in, the pure unmixed doctrines of the gospel, which are indeed a mystery to the carnal unbelieving world, and exceed the comprehension of enlightened minds themselves; the deacons ought to hold these fast in their belief and profession, with all the sincerity of a heart, that is purified by faith, and purged from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

10 And in order to their being chosen to this office, they, as well as pastors, ought to be first tried, proved, and approved of, as to their moral and religious character; and then, being found unblameable with regard to any notorious crime, or any remarkable defect in the forementioned qualifications, they should be introduced into the office, and intrusted with the whole business of a deacon in all its parts.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

11 In like manner, (if they are in a married state) their wives, for the credit of religion, suitable to the near relation in which they stand to these church officers, ought to be persons of a grave, chaste, and decent behaviour, free from all lightness of temper, words, dress, and deportment; they ought not to be defamers of others by false accusations, (*παραλογισαί*) which is the very spirit of the devil himself; much less should they be tale-bearers of injurious things, especially to the poor, lest the deacons, their husbands, be thereby prejudiced against them: But they should be (*επιμεληταί*) watchful over their tongues and passions, temperate in eating and drinking, and careful in family-economy within their own sphere, from whence the husband may take hints for prudent and frugal management in supplying the wants of the poor; and they ought to be, not only faithful to the marriage-bed, but just and true to all the trusts committed

committed to them, with faithfulness to God, to their husbands, and others, never daring to purloin, or embezzle any of the church's treasure.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

12 The deacons also, as well as pastors, (*ver. 2. see the note there*) ought to avoid the sin of polygamy and unlawful divorces, keeping to one wife, as long as she lives; and whether they have children, or other members of their families, they, as persons placed in a public station of a religious nature, ought to set a good example to others, by maintaining a due decorum in the order of their houses.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

13 They ought carefully to attend to these things: For such as have acquitted themselves with fidelity, and for any length of time, in discharging the deacon's office, well deserve, and will certainly obtain, high degrees of honour and respect in the church*; and, in that way, may warrantably hope to acquire and increase in gifts and graces suitable to their stations; and they will be emboldened, from the testimony of their own consciences to their fidelity, and from the just reputation they have gained in the church and the world, to be open, free, and courageous in their profession of the pure and unmixed doctrine of Christ, and of their faith in him, whereby they have derived grace from him, to enable them to be faithful in fulfilling their trust for his glory.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

14 I write these things, in brief, for your direction, and to be communicated, as there may be occasion, to others; hoping at the same time to have an opportunity, ere long, of coming to you at Ephesus, or elsewhere, to give you still farther instructions.

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou

15 But if God in his providence should order my being detained longer from you, than may be expected, I send this letter, to shew how you ought to conduct yourself

N O T E.

* The good degree which they purchase, or procure to themselves, seems rather to relate to the honour they should rise to in the esteem of the church, than to their advancement to the pastoral office: For that office is a *distinct order* from the deacon's, and not a *different degree* of the same order; and the work of a deacon, being chiefly to attend the temporal affairs of the church in serving tables, has very little tendency to a preparation for the office of the ministry, which is of a spiritual nature, as it principally lies in persons continually giving themselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. (Acts vi. 2, 3, 4.) Accordingly the learned Dr. Owen con-

jectures, that this *good degree*, (*βασιμς*) which signifies a *step*, or a seat a little exalted in an assembly, to hear or speak, alludes to the custom of sitting in the Jewish synagogues, which had some seats raised above others for persons to sit in, according to their dignity; and so it may metaphorically signify some place of eminence in a church-assembly, which is due to such as have used the office of a deacon well, where, with boldness and confidence, they may assist in the management of the affairs of the church, as this belongs to a profession of the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (See the Doctor's true nature of a gospel-church, page 186, 187.)

thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

yourself in what relates to the house, which God has built for himself, and is the sole proprietor of; not an house made with hands, like that which he caused to be built to his own name at *Jerusalem*, (1 Kings viii. 19.) much less like the temples that heathens have erected to their lifeless idols; but an house of a spiritual nature, consisting of credible professors of Christ's name, who, as lively stones built together, (1 Pet. ii. 5.) make up the church of the only living and true God, which he animates by his spirit, and in which he dwells after a more excellent manner than he ever did in the temple of *Solomon* itself, though he filled *that* with a glory: (1 Kings viii. 10.) The strength, ornament, and safety of this church is altogether spiritual, of a different, and incomparably nobler kind, than any pillar and basis of a material temple can be *. It is the sound truth of the gospel, of which Christ is the sum and substance, and which you and all faithful pastors are to preach and maintain in all holy ministrations.

16 And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

16 And it must be confessedly owned, (*ομολογούμενος*) that the true doctrine of the gospel, which is according to godliness, (*chap. vi. 3.*) is a great, glorious, and incomprehensible mystery; (see the note on 1 Cor. ii. 7.) some of the principal articles of which are these, namely, That the eternal Son of God, who is strictly and properly God, together with the Father and Spirit, even *God over all blessed for ever*, (John i. 14. and Rom. ix. 5.) was manifested, for the most important purposes of redemption and salvation, in his incarnate state; and so was *Immanuel, God with us*: (Mat. i. 21, 23.) And, having satisfied divine justice by his obedience, sufferings, and death, he was publicly acquitted and accepted of God, as the righteous head of the church, and

was

N O T E.

* *The pillar and ground of truth* is referred by some to the church, and by others to Timothy and gospel-ministers. But *the truth of the gospel* is more properly the pillar and ground of the church, than the church is of the truth; and the church cannot possibly be the pillar of truth any otherwise, than as it holds forth and maintains the truth, which itself is built upon; and though the apostles are called *pillars*, Gal. ii. 9.; yet yet they cannot be said to be so in their own persons, but only as in their ministrations they supported the gospel-doctrine concerning Christ, as the foundation of the church, 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. which, on that account, is called *the foundation of the apostles and prophets*,

Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, Eph. ii. 10.; and the doctrine of Peter's confession, or Christ, whom he confessed, is called *the rock, on which he would build his church*. (Matth. xvi. 18. see the note there.) It therefore seems to me that, in opposition to the pillars and foundation of a material temple, which is here alluded to, *the truth of the gospel, or Christ* as exhibited in the gospel, is meant by the *pillar and ground of truth* on which the church stands, as its foundation and support: Accordingly *this truth*, is spoken of under the appellation of *the mystery of godliness*; and several articles of it are specified in the following verse.

was cleared of all the vile reproaches of his enemies, in his resurrection, by a concurrence of the Holy Spirit, with his own power, as a divine person; (see the note on *Rom. i. 4.*) and so he was raised again for our justification from all the offences for which he was delivered to death: (*Rom. iv. 25.*) He was after that seen of angels, and honourably witnessed unto, in his ascension, (*Acts i. 10.*) vast multitudes of which surrounded him, as his adoring servants and courtiers, in his triumphal entrance into heaven: (*Psal. lxxviii. 17.*) And, in consequence of all this, he was preached, as the atoning, risen, and exalted Saviour, to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; and was believed on by abundantly more *Gentiles* than *Jews**; and so was received in a glorious manner by them, who flocked in crowds to him, under the glorious dispensation of the Spirit, which he shed down abundantly from on high; and they were wrought upon to embrace him with alacrity and joy, and to make an open and honourable profession of him in all the glory of his person, mediation, and exaltation.

N O T E.

* Various have been the laboured interpretations of the several clauses in this verse, and attempts to range them all in a consistent order of time, which I think ought to be attended to; but none, that I have been able to consult, have given me satisfaction in making both the sense and order agree: The greatest difficulty lies in giving such an account of *justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, and received up to glory*, as may be adjusted to a regular succession of the other intervening events here recited. All these passages therefore are paraphrased in such a manner, as I apprehend to be just, and fully to comport with the due order in which they stand. I suppose the chief objection, by many at least, will be made against the construction here given of *received up into glory*, which my thoughts had turned to before I saw those of Dr. Benson's friend upon it, some part of which surprisingly fell in with, and helped to confirm my own. His words, as quoted by the Dr. in his note on this place, so far as they are to my purpose, are these, "If this be the true sense of *ἀνελθὼν εἰς δόξαν* (i. e.) *was gloriously received*, the order of the several articles may be very just; for, upon our Lord's being preached unto the *Gentiles*, he was believed on in the world, and met with a glorious reception: For what multitudes in the apostolic age embraced

the Christian religion? And in favour of this interpretation it may be observed that *ἀνελθὼν* does frequently signify *was received*, without denoting any thing of ascending or descending. See *Acts* xx. 13, 14. and xxiii. 31. *Eph. vi. 13.* 2 *Tim. iv. 11.*" To which I would add, that (*εἰς δόξαν*) *in glory*, signifies and is rendered *glorious*, 2 *Cor. iii. 7, 8, 11.* and *riches in glory* (*εἰς δόξαν*) signifies *glorious riches*, *Phil. iv. 19.* It is also well known that the preposition (*ἐν*) *in*, very often signifies, and is rendered *with*, as in *Matth. iii. 11.* *Mark i. 23.* *Luke iv. 32.* 1 *Cor. ii. 4.* *Eph. vi. 2.* and many other places; so that *in glory* might more justly be rendered *with glory*, than *into glory*: And *justified in the Spirit* seems plainly to relate to the signal testimony, which the Holy Spirit gave to our blessed Lord, in raising him from the dead, as a just and righteous person, who, having fulfilled the righteousness of the law, and satisfied divine justice, as the substitute of his people, ought no longer to be detained under the power of death: For, otherwise, the resurrection of Christ is left out of this great mystery of godliness, though it is one of the most remarkable and important branches of it; and this is here placed between his being manifested in the flesh, and seen of angels, when they attended him, as a grand retinue, in his ascension to glory.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a high esteem should we have of the churches which God has erected in our world! Churches, which he, as the living God, animates by his Spirit, and dwells in, as in his own house. What suitable officers has he appointed to attend their spiritual and temporal concerns! And what admirable directions has he given about them, that none unqualified may be chosen to such important stations, and none may misbehave in them! How good and honourable, and yet laborious a work is it, to have a pastoral oversight of souls, and their spiritual concerns! But how many are the excellent qualifications necessary for it! Persons called to this office ought to be skilful in the word of righteousness, fit to teach others, and not raw upstarts, lest they be puffed up with pride, which was the sin and ruin of the devil: They are to be men of blameless morals, of prudence, faithfulness and gravity, generosity and affability, in every relation of life; keeping the families and children under their care in good order, and governing their own passions and appetites, tongues and hands, with moderation and decency, lest they fall into reproach, and Satan and his emissaries take an advantage against them. And in how many things should deacons, together with their wives, copy after them! Officers of this sort, who have the care of the temporal concerns of the church, should hold the mystery of faith in a good conscience, and be very exact in their morals: And the more diligent, faithful, prudent, and compassionate they are in discharging the duties of their trust, the higher honour and esteem they will rise to in the church, and the more courageous will they grow in the profession of their faith in Christ. Happy souls, that are enabled to act up to all these characters and duties, in their respective stations! But how careful should they be that the church may not sink for want of having the truth of the gospel for its foundation and support! O the unfathomable depth, importance and glory of the great mystery of godliness, as it shines forth in God manifested in the flesh to make atonement for sin; raised from the dead for the justification of his person and cause, and of believers in him; beheld, witnessed to, and adored by the holy angels in his ascension to heaven; preached with wide extent to the *Gentile*-world; and believed on by multitudes of them, who received him in a glorious manner, suitable to his own exaltation, as God-man mediator on his throne!

C H A P. IV.

The apostle informs Timothy, by the spirit of prophecy, of departures from the faith in various instances, that began already to appear, and would issue in the grand apostasy of after-times, 1,—5. And, with reference thereunto, gives him several directions, with suitable motives to enforce them, for a due discharge of the duties of his office, 6,—16.

TEXT.

NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils:

PARAPHRASE.

NOW to caution you and all others, whether ministers, or Christians of every character, against certain gross errors, which, in opposition to the glorious *mystery of godliness*, (chap. iii. 16.) will be a *mystery of iniquity*; (2 Thess. ii. 7.) and which begins already to work, and will hereafter have a much wider, and more terrible spread; It is proper to acquaint you, that the Spirit of God foretels in the inspired writings *, and most expressly and clearly by immediate

NOTE.

* The Spirit says expressly. Mr. Joseph Mede, in his apostasy of the latter times,

immediate revelation to me, that in a future time of this last age, or dispensation of God toward the church *, there will arise many false professors of Christianity, that will apostatize (αποστρέφειν) from the pure doctrines of faith, as contained in the gospel; and will attend to persons of an intriguing temper, under the influence of infernal spirits †; and so will be misled into the idolatrous principles and practices of worshipping angels and departed saints, in such a manner, as very nearly resembles the religious honours, which are paid by heathens to their demons, whom they worship, as mediators between their superior gods and themselves.

a Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having

2 The methods that these seducers will take to draw many into their own pernicious errors, will be,

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by

N O T E S.

times, (chap. xvi. p. 821. &c. of his works) supposes this to refer to what is written Dan. xi. 36.; others take it to refer to our Lord's predictions of many false prophets, that should arise, and deceive many: (Matth. xxiv. 11.) But as the apostle had so clearly and expressly wrote upon this point in his second epistle to the *Thessalonians*, (chap. ii.) before he sent this epistle to *Timothy*, why may we not understand him to mean that the Spirit had in an immediate manner revealed it to him, and there, as well as here, spoke of it by him?

* In the latter times (αὐτοῖς ταῖς ἑσχατοῖς) signifies in the last dispensation of God under the Messiah's reign; so that any period, within the compass of this last age, may properly be said to be in the latter times: And though there were some beginnings of apostacy in the apostle's days, that tended to the grand one, as may be gathered from a *Thess.* ii. 7.; yet what he had principally in view was, I think, to come to pass in some ages after that time, as may appear from what he adds a *Thess.* ii. 7.—11. It was nevertheless proper for *Timothy* to know, and give notice of this apostacy to the Christians of his day, that they might be the better guarded against every thing of that aspect; because corruptions of this tendency began already to work in judaizers, who were for keeping up the distinction of meats, and a show of humility; were for worshipping of angels, and embracing other errors, that were broached by false apostles, and deceitful workers; an account of which is given at large in Dr. *Whitby's* note on this text. But we cannot justly infer from thence, as the Doctor would, that the a-

postle had not a further eye upon a still more flagrant and general apostacy; since, notwithstanding all the doctor's laboured, and seemingly forced attempts to the contrary, the apostle plainly points to this in those passages of the second epistle to the *Thessalonians* above referred to, and since he wrote for the use of the church in all succeeding generations.

† The spirit, principles, and practices of the antichristian church of Rome so exactly match with the description given, in this and the two next verses, of these seducers, and their corruptions, that any one may easily read their character in it: For they have most notoriously apostatized from the primitive faith of the gospel: Their doctrine of worshipping angels and departed saints, and making use of them as mediators, is apparently the doctrine of demons, in the nearest affinity to that, which was found among the heathens; their methods of propagating their religion, by spurious legends, forged miracles, and fabulous stories, under hypocritical pretences of zeal for God, while interest is their principal aim; their astonishing hardness, and insensibility of any moral evil, in the most vile, criminal, and murderous methods for extirpating, what they call heresy, and serving the church; their forbidding priests, monks, and nuns to marry; and enjoining abstinence from flesh in Lent, and on Wednesdays and Fridays, all the year round, so evidently answer the apostle's distinguishing characters of their apostacy, that there need no plainer marks to warrant an application of them to that antichristian church. (See also the notes on a *Thess.* ii. 3, 4. and 2 *Tim.* iii. 1.)

ving their conscience seared with a hot iron;

by uttering abundance of falsehoods to delude them, and establish their own authority, under hypocritical pretences of zeal for religion; and they will not stick at any iniquitous measures to carry on and effect their own corrupt designs; their consciences being as insensible of good and evil, and of the dreadful consequences of their guilt, as flesh, that is seared with a hot iron, becomes callous and incapable of feeling.

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

3 Some of the errors which they will vent and propagate are, prohibiting marriage to some sorts of persons, and so disannulling the order of the God of nature, and exposing them to all temptations of unchastity; as also obliging people to abstain from some kinds of food, which God created for the sustenance of man, and now, under the gospel-dispensation, (which has taken away all former legal distinctions of clean and unclean meats) allows all sorts of wholesome flesh to be eaten, with moderation and sobriety, at all times, as occasions require, with thankfulness to him, for providing them, and for allowing all Christians to eat of them with a covenant-right, who believe the truth as it is in Jesus, and understand and make a conscientious prudent use of the gospel-doctrine of Christian liberty, as to that point.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

4 For every creature that God has made, is in itself good, as it came out of his hand for the purposes for which he created it; and nothing that is proper for food is to be scrupled or forbidden, provided it be received with religious gratitude and acknowledgments of God as the author and giver of it.

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

5 For it is sanctified to our lawful use by the gospel of the ever-blessed God, which has taken away all ceremonial uncleanness from it; as also by his commanding a blessing upon it; (*Mat. iv. 4.*) and by prayer, according to the laudable custom at meals, to implore his blessing upon it for the refreshment of animal nature, that it may be fitted for his service; and after the refreshment to bless the Lord for it. (*Deut. viii. 10.* and see the note on *Mat. xiv. 19.*)

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

6 If you, my dear son, in the faith, shall carefully from time to time remind, and warn, the Christian brethren of all the things before-mentioned, and particularly of this grand apostacy, some tendencies to which already appear, (see the two last notes on *ver. 1.*) that they may be the more upon their watch, and guard against every, the least approach to it, you will acquit yourself with honour, as a useful, wise, and faithful servant of Jesus Christ, that has his glory at heart, and will order your ministrations suitable to the circumstances of the times, and the present danger of errors and corruptions creeping into the church;

and

and will therein approve yourself to have been well taught, refreshed, and strengthened in your own soul, as having thoroughly digested the pure doctrines of faith in Christ, and of every other evangelical truth that is connected with it; the knowledge and experience of which you have sought after, and happily attained. (*παρηκολούθησας.* See the note on *Luke i. 3.*)

7 But refuse profane and old wives fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

7 But as to the fabulous traditions of the Jews, and their endless genealogies, which I have already cautioned against, as tending to corrupt the simplicity of the gospel, rather than to godly edifying, (*chap. i. 4.*) and which are indeed as foolish as the idle stories that old women delight to tell children, pay no manner of regard to these; reject and have nothing to do with them; but, like athletics in the Grecian games, (*γυμναστικὰς αἰνέσεις*) exert yourself with the utmost labour, diligence, and vigour, in promoting the doctrines and duties of true piety to God through Jesus Christ, and in exemplifying the beauties of practical godliness in your own life and conversation.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

8 For (*γυμνασία*) the greatest pains that can be taken in mere external acts of religion, in which the body only is engaged, is little worth, neither pleasing to God, nor of any good account to a man's own soul. (*Mat. xv. 8, 9.*) But evangelical, vital, and practical godliness, in heart, and life, is every way advantageous, with regard to all things that concern us; there being express promises, even under the gospel-state, (*chap. ii. 15. Mat. vi. 25,—33. Rom. viii. 28. and Phil. iv. 19.*) of the blessing of God as annexed to it, in what relates to the necessities, conveniences, and a sanctified use of all circumstances of this present life; and still more excellent and abundant promises, relating to the glory and blessedness of the better world to come: Yea, *this is* emphatically *the promise, that he has promised us, even eternal life.* (*1 John ii. 25.*)

9 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.

9 This promise, with all the rest, may be fully depended upon, as a certain truth, which God in faithfulness will make good; and it is worthy the highest regard, esteem, and entertainment, as a rich encouragement to serve the Lord, and cleave to him, amidst all difficulties, oppositions, and dangers; how many soever apostatize from him.

10 For therefore we both labour, and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour

10 For it is in consideration of this important truth, and of the assured hopes of its accomplishment to ourselves, that we, the apostles and servants of Christ, undergo great fatigues in our holy ministrations to advance his glory, interest, and kingdom, and

Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

and gain souls to him; and that we patiently and chearfully bear the most contemptuous scorn, and infamous revilings, from our adversaries, for his sake; because we firmly rely on the power, truth, and faithfulness of the Almighty and ever-living God, who has life in himself, and is the fountain of both natural and spiritual life, and of every blessing that is needful for the support and comfort of either of them, as he is the great Preserver of all mankind, and the author and giver of all their temporal salvations and deliverances, and, in a providential way, is good to all; (*Pf. cxlv. 9.*) and he is so, by the particular care of his providence, and in a special way of covenant-love and faithfulness to true believers, with respect to all the promised good things that pertain to the present life; as well as is most eminently so, with respect to an everlasting salvation, in that which is to come. (*ver. 8.*)

11 These things command and teach.

11 These things are of such vast consequence to the encouragement of faith and holiness, that I would have you inculcate them, by divine authority, upon the consciences of your hearers; and illustrate and explain them at large, in the course of your ministry, that they may see the excellence and advantage of true religion and godliness.

12 Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

12 Let it be your study and endeavour, by divine grace, to acquit yourself herein with such diligence, gravity, good judgment, prudence, and fidelity to your trust, and with such evidence of your own heartily believing, esteeming, and living under the power of what you preach to others, that none may have occasion to slight, and condemn you and your admonitions, your office, or your management of it, on account of your youth: But, the more effectually to prevent this, let it be your great concern, that you yourself may be an amiable and shining example to all other believers, in the excellency of your doctrine and edifying discourse; in the regularity of your religious and moral behaviour; in the sincerity and ardour of your love to God and Christ and immortal souls, to truth and holiness, and to all fellow-ministers and Christians; in your spiritual-mindedness, fervent zeal for the glory of God, and aboundings in all the fruits of the Spirit; in the steady and lively exercise and profession of your faith, and maintaining the doctrines of it; and in all (*αγνία*) chastity and purity of heart and life.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

13 You may have still further directions from me by word of mouth, when, according to my hope, (*chap. iii. 14.*) I may have an opportunity of seeing you. In the mean while, attend to your charge, as

ye

ye ought to do all the days of your life; and that you may in the best manner fulfil it, addict yourself to, and spend much of your time in reading, as well as praying over, the holy scriptures of the Old Testament, and this epistle, together with all other inspired writings of the New Testament, that are extant, for the improvement of your own soul in knowledge and spiritual gifts, grace and comfort, and further fitting you for public service: And as in this way you should lay in, so I would have you lay out your stock of Christian-knowledge and experience, by exhorting and comforting others, and spreading sound doctrine among them, for their conversion, edification, and establishment.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

14 And as God has richly furnished you with extraordinary gifts for this service, Take heed that you do not neglect to stir them up, and to exercise and improve them to the best advantage, which were abundantly conferred upon you for preaching the gospel, and fulfilling the whole of your ministry, according to the remarkable prophecies that have been delivered by some inspired men of late concerning you; (*chap. i. 18.*) and which were communicated to you, particularly at your ordination; as a signal of which, I and other elders, who joined with me in that solemnity, laid our hands upon you. (*2 Tim. i. 6.*)

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

15 Let the things that I have been mentioning, as the subject of your ministry and rule of conduct, and what I have now been saying about reading the scriptures, and the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which you are favoured with, be frequently and seriously reflected upon, to affect your own heart with them, and to excite your diligence in improving them; and meditate closely and seriously upon the holy scriptures, as well as read them: Let your attention to these things, and your ministrations of them, and prayer for a blessing upon them, be the entire business of your life, without entangling yourself with the affairs of this world; (*2 Tim. ii. 4.*) And (*1 Cor. 10. 31.*) let your whole soul be in them, as in your proper sphere and delightful element, that your proficiency in wisdom, gifts, and grace, and in experience of God's being with you, may evidently appear, in all things, to all about you.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

16 In the first place, Be very careful in what concerns yourself, as a minister and Christian. See to it, that you and your services be accepted of God in Christ; that your heart be right with him, as to its principles, frame and temper, motives and ends; that your gifts be duly cultivated; and that the whole of your behaviour toward God, yourself, and others,

others, be well pleasing in his sight: And then take heed what doctrine you preach, and how you preach it, that it be sound and clear, according to the word of God, important and seasonable, evangelical and practical; and that it be well explained, confirmed, defended, and improved various ways, as occasions require, and your subject leads you: And persist stedfastly in the practice of all this, as your proper and stated work to the end of your days: For in so doing, and by means thereof, you, under the influence of the blessed Spirit, will be instrumental to the final salvation of your own soul, and the souls of many that attend your ministry, and hear with the obedience of faith.

RECollections.

It is melancholy to think of the woful apostacies from the faith of the gospel, that have been in all ages; but it needs not seem strange to us, since they were foretold by the spirit of prophecy: And how plainly has it pointed out the seducing hypocritical arts of falsehood and deceit, that are used, without shame or conscience, by the apostate church of *Rome*, together with their worshipping of deified saints, forbidding marriages, and enjoining abstinence from meats, which God created, and allows under the gospel-dispensation to be moderately used, with thanksgiving for them, and prayer for his blessing upon them! With what contempt should we reject the errors that are built upon uncertain traditions, as we would idle stories that are told to please children! And instead of resting in formal bodily services, that turn to no good account, how concerned should we be to live in the practice of vital religion, which has a gracious entail of blessings upon it, by the promise of God! He, as a bountiful benefactor, affords temporal preferrences, deliverances, and mercies to mankind in general; and by the particular care of his providence, as a covenant-God, he gives them all in a way of special love, and completes them in eternal salvation, to every true believer: What important truths are these, and how worthy of the most hearty entertainment! With what care should ministers inculcate them on those that are under their charge, for their caution on the one hand, and encouragement on the other; humbly trusting in the ever-living God, for their own support and comfort, amidst all the reproaches, difficulties and labours they undergo for Christ's sake! And while, together with this, they are exemplary in faith, love, and all holiness, they will approve themselves as good ministers of Jesus Christ, and good proficients in the doctrine and grace of faith: But, in order hereunto, how much diligence ought they to use in studying, reading, and improving the gifts God has bestowed upon them; and in giving themselves entirely to these exercises, and to preaching and prayer! And what need have they to take heed first to their own state, temper, and conversation; and then to their doctrine, with perseverance therein, as the means of God's appointing and blessing, for the final salvation of their own souls, and the souls of their hearers!

C H A P. V.

The apostle gives orders how to behave towards elder, and younger men and women, 1, 2. And toward poor widows, 3,—8. Describes the characters of such widows, as are, or are not, proper to be maintained by the church, and taken into its service, 9,—16. Shews the respect that is to be paid to those that are elders by office, 17,—19. But charges Timothy to take due care in rebuking offenders of all ranks and stations, in ordaining ministers, and in using such moderate refreshments, as were necessary for his own weak state of health, 20,—25.

TEXT.

REBUKE not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

PARAPHRASE.

AS you, my son Timothy, are a young man, (*chap. iv. 12.*) who ought, as such, to behave with the utmost prudence and decency, to screen you from contempt on account of your youth; and as the hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in a way of righteousness, (*Prov. xvi. 31.*) I would advise you to take care that, whatever sinful infirmities attend any ancient Christian *, you do not assume an air of haughty, magisterial and severe authority in reproofing one of such venerable years; (and the same may be observed much more, with respect to one that bears the office of an elder in the church) But treat him with honour and respect in your converse with him; (*Lev. xix. 32.*) and deliver your exhortations to him, rather in a way of earnest entreaty to depart from all iniquity, with a due deference to his age and standing, such as you would show, in like cases, to your own father himself after the flesh: And let young men, that are more on a level, as to years, with yourself, and need reproof, be dealt with in a more free, and yet meek, affable, and affectionate manner, as you would treat your own brethren in nature, as well as in grace.

^a The elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters,

2 In like manner behave toward godly women advanced in years, with such a sort of reverence, even when you would correct any fault in them, as is due from

NOTE.

* An elder here seems most directly to mean, not one that is so by office, as it does, *ver. 17.*; but old or elderly men: For it is in this place opposed, not to private members of the church, but to young men, as elderly women also are to the younger in the next verse: And yet as, in the reason of things, they that are elders by office are to be treated in as respectful a manner, at least, as is here directed, we may very well include

them. But the rebuke here intended seems to relate to the lesser infirmities, that older and younger Christians are liable to, rather than to infamous and notorious crimes: For, whatsoever a person's age or station be, Timothy was solemnly charged publicly to rebuke such sinners, *ver. 20.*; and yet, even in this case, a prudent decency was doubtless to be exercised in reproofing them, suitable to their years and stations in the church.

ters, with all purity.

3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth

from children to their own mothers: And manage your admonitions of young women that profess Christianity, as you would in giving them to your own sisters; and be sure let it be with such modesty and chastity in your looks, speech, and behaviour, as shall give no occasion of reproach to your own, or her character.

3 As to believing women that are poor widows, and, as such, are apt to think themselves the more neglected and imposed upon, pay all becoming respect to them, and take care that they be honourably provided for by the church*, if they are indeed desolate, according to the strongest sense of that term, as not only bereaved of their husbands, but also destitute of any near of kin that are able and willing to support them.

4 But if any religious widows have children or grand-children, (*εγγονα*) that are capable of assisting them, and supplying their necessities; Let such of their descendents be taught (as they ought to learn) their duty toward their parents, according to our Lord's instructions, (*Mark vii. 10,—12.*) and toward God therein, who has commanded them to honour their *mothers* as well as their fathers, (*Ex. xx. 12.*) in conscientiously doing all they can to shew a reverence of them, and provide for such of them as need their help; and so make them the most grateful returns for all their trouble, tenderness, care and pains, love and solicitude, kindness and expence, in bringing them up, and conducting them through all the exercising follies and dangers of their childhood and youth, till they settled them in the world: For such a behaviour toward them is in itself just and equitable, worthy and honourable; (*καλον*) and is highly pleasing in the sight of God, who has fixed the relation, and the duties of it, between parents and children.

5 Now a widow *indeed*, that is a proper object of the church's charity, is one who, being in indigent circumstances, destitute of relations to relieve her,

trusts

NOTE

* It appears from *ver. 4.* and *8.* that the *honour* here meant relates to the *alimovance*, which was to be made to these widows of things needful and convenient for their subsistence: and the word is used in the same sense, *ver. 17.* as is evident from what follows in that and the next verse: (see the note there) Accordingly our Lord, speaking of the corrupt traditions of the *Pharisees*, which discharged children from contributing to

the support of their poor parents, in case they had devoted to God what was necessary for their relief, taxes it as a breach of the commandment to honour *their father and mother*; *Matth. xv. 4-5, 6.* and *Mark vii. 10,—13.*; and the apostle calls the generous benevolence of the people at *Malta*, their *honouring* him and his companions with *many benovours*, *Acts xxviii. 10.*

eth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

trusts in the Lord to take care of her for time, as well as eternity, and to supply her with needful things; and is one who, with an habitually religious disposition, continues morning and evening, and frequently on all occasions, to offer up her humble addresses to God in earnest petitions and pleas, according to her faith in his providence, for whatsoever he sees to be best for her.

6 But she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth.

6 But the widow that gives herself up to a jovial, loose and voluptuous way of living, under the power of carnal inclinations, is in a spiritual sense dead; dead to God, and *dead in trespasses and sins*, (Eph. ii. 1.) while in a natural sense she is alive, and lives in wanton pleasure; and so ought neither to be maintained, nor owned by the church, as any member of their holy body.

7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

7 And these things are of so great consequence to the moral and religious life, and to the reputation, beauty and order of churches and families, that you ought to declare and solemnly enforce them in your public ministry and private conversation, to the end that these sorts of people may be so regular in conduct, as not to deserve rebuke (*ὡς ἀπεπιλημένοι ὡς οὖν*) for scandalous crimes, and the church may not be blameable for conniving at them, and misapplying their charity.

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

8 But if there be any professor of Christ's name that is so very unnatural, as not to do what in him lies, according to his circumstances, to supply the wants of his own near relations, especially of his own aged parents, together with his wife and children, who are the principal and dearest parts of his family; he has practically renounced the doctrines of Christianity; and, whatever his pretences be, he really is worse, than one that believes nothing of them, as he not only violates the law of nature and humanity, in instances that many heathens themselves would be ashamed of; but acts directly contrary to divine revelation itself, which enjoins all relative and social duties.

9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the

9 If there be any poor widow, whose offspring either cannot, or will not relieve her, the church ought to take care of her: But if they have their thoughts upon her, to choose her for an assistant to the deacons*, in visiting and ministering to the poor and sick,

A a 2

especially

N O T E.

* The apostle's insisting on a widow's being *threescore years old, before she be taken into the number*, leads us to consider him as speaking here, not merely of taking them into the number of those that were to be maintained by the church, but of those that were also to be employed as *deaconesses* in it: For younger widows might be so poor and infirm, as to be proper objects of the church's charity, though not fit for the office of a deaconess, which, in the early

the wife of one man,

especially of the female sex, she ought to be, at least, sixty years old, and free from the scandal of having ever been married to more than one husband at a time, or having causelessly put away her husband, and been married to another. (See *Mark* x. 12. and the note on *chap.* iii. 2.)

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

10 She ought also, in order to her being taken in to this service, to be a person of good character, for having faithfully and prudently discharged the relative duties of the married life; as for instance, If she has behaved well in religiously educating children, or in hospitably receiving, and treating such godly strangers, whether ministers or others, as Providence has cast in her way; if she has been ready to do the meanest offices, for the refreshment of such holy persons, even to the washing of their feet, as is customary in these hot countries, after travelling in sandals; If she has ministered, with compassion and tenderness, by counsel, or otherwise, to Christians in any sort of affliction; In a word; if, in the general course of her life, she has laboured, with care and diligence, to perform every good office toward God and others, as opportunity offered, she then may well be admitted, not only to partake of the charity of the church, but to do the part of a deaconess in it.

11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

11 But, if younger widows would desire to be admitted to such a station, it would be most prudent not to encourage, but to reject such a motion: For when once (*καταστίνονται*) they have begun (as there may be danger of of it) to grow voluptuous and lascivious, contrary to their profession of Christ, and to consult their own ease and pleasure, instead of his honour and service, they will be tempted to marry at any rate, though it be into a heathen family, that they may get rid of their irksome restraints and labours, in attending the religious poor.

12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

12 And they will expose themselves to shame and condemnation in the eyes of the world, to the censure of the church, and to the righteous judgments of God here, (see the note on *1 Cor.* xi. 29.) as well

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ly ages of Christianity, might be very convenient, for preventing scandal among heathen neighbours, and relations of such converted women, whether young or old, as on account of poverty, or sickness, and other occasions, the officers of the church were obliged to be very conversant with; as well as for performing the family services of women in attending ministers that usually travelled about to preach the gospel; or were dri-

ven from place to place by persecution; but, these reasons now ceasing, there is not the like occasion for deaconesses in the present age: And as I do not find any institution of them, or prescription of their duty, as there was of *deacons*, *Acts* vi. 1, 2, &c. it appears to me to be matter of mere prudence in the church to commit such offices to women, or not, as circumstances require.

well as to eternal damnation hereafter; because they rejected their former profession of faith in Christ, or renounced the doctrine which they at first notionally believed concerning him; and deserted the trust committed to them.

13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but ratlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

13 And, together with this, such young widows, as are more addicted to pleasure than business, soon contract a habit of idleness, and trifle away their time in gadding about from one house to another, for amusement and diversion; nor do they only grow lazy creatures, but also impertinent, flirting, loose, and foolish talkers, and officious pryvers, and intruders into other peoples affairs, which do not belong to them, that they may carry stories about, whether right or wrong, and make their own remarks upon them, to please some, and expose others; which ought by no means to be done, but is very mischievous to the reputation and peace of their neighbours and acquaintance.

14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

14 Instead therefore of younger widows being admitted to any place of service in the church*, I would rather advise, that they be left in such a situation, as admits of their marrying in the Lord, if they be so disposed, and have a good offer, that promises fair for a comfortable maintenance; and that, having entered into that relation, they breed, nourish, and religiously educate such children as it may please God to give them; and, being mistresses of families, may conduct their household-affairs with faithfulness, prudence, and good housewifery, and behave with such diligence, sobriety, and modesty, in all the duties of their relation, as to give no advantage to any enemies of Christ, that seek, and would gladly take it, to speak evil of them, and of him and religion on their account.

15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

15 I speak so particularly about this; because there are instances of some young widows already, who have turned off from their profession of Christ, and followed the devices of Satan in such sinful practices

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* The younger women seem to me to refer to young widows, who are all along the subject of the three preceding verses; and so it carries an intimation of the lawfulness of these, as well as other young women's marrying, if there be no other circumstance to forbid it: But it is not to be imagined, that when the apostle says, *I will that they marry, and bear children*, he meant to oblige them to marry, any more than to bear chil-

dren, whether they were inclined to the one, and had a proper opportunity for it; or whether God should bless them with the other, or not: His advice to *virgins*, 1 Cor. vii. 34. &c. is directly contrary to any such injunction; but what he here would suggest is, that they ought to be at liberty, and that it would be more proper for them to marry, &c. than to be a burden to the church, or put into the office of a deaconess.

tices as have just now been mentioned. (ver. 11, 12, 13.)

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

17 Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

16 But, to return to the case of poor aged widows, If any Christian man or woman have ancient needy mothers or grandmothers, (ver. 4.) whose husbands are dead, such offspring of theirs, whether sons or daughters, ought to supply their wants, in the best manner that their own circumstances admit of; and if they can relieve them at their own expence, the maintaining of such widows ought not to be thrown upon the church, which should be excused from it, that they may have the more to spare for the help and comfort of those that are indeed desolate widows, as having none of their own family to provide for them.

17 And now I am speaking about the use of the church's stock, I would recommend the paying a due regard to such elders as by office are employed in the spiritual services of the church, that they, who are prudent and faithful in presiding over them, (*καλως ᾠγουμένους*) may stand high in their civil respect and esteem, and may have liberal allowances, sufficient to make their worldly circumstances easy, reputable, and comfortable *; especially those of them that are eminent

NOTE.

* As *honour* includes *maintenance*, (see the note on verse 3.) *double honour* seems to signify *great civil respect*, and *liberal maintenance*, the last of which is referred to in the next verse, and the first in the verse that follows it. This *honour* the apostle orders to be paid to the *elders that rule well, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine*, by which some think, that *ruling elders* are distinguished from *pastors* or *preaching elders*, as different officers in the church. But it is, at least, very doubtful, whether such a conclusion can be drawn from this text. For not only the elders, that *laboured in the word and doctrine*, but the elders also, that *ruled well*, were to be deemed worthy of the *honour of maintenance*, as appears from the next verse. Now I can hardly believe that these elders, (who are supposed to be engaged only in the rule and government of the church) any more than its *deacons*, were to be maintained at the church's cost in their lay-capacity, which left them at full liberty to pursue the business of their secular callings, for their own and families subsistence. And the reason, which the apostle subjoins in the following verse, why *elders* ought to be maintained by the church, certainly relates to

none but *preaching elders*: Nor do I collect that orders are ever given, in any other part of scripture, for the maintenance of either *deacons*, or these supposed *ruling* and *non-preaching elders*; or that an obligation can be inferred from any passage of the New Testament, that churches should be furnished with such sort of officers; though perhaps prudence, in some circumstances of affairs, may make them expedient. I therefore incline to think, with some others, that the apostle intends only *preaching elders*, when he directs *double honour* to be paid to the *elders that rule well, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine*; and that the distinction lies, not in the *order* of officers, but in the *degree* of their diligence, faithfulness, and eminence, in *laboriously* fulfilling their ministerial work to the edification of the church; and so the emphasis is to be laid on the word *LABOUR in the word and doctrine*, which has an *especially* annexed to it. Accordingly the learned Mr. Joseph Mede observes, that to *labour* (*κοπιῶν*) signifies, not simply to labour, but to *labour with much travel and toil*, which he supposes refers to the *evangelists* or *prophets*, that travelled up and down to preach the gospel; because

eminent and remarkably laborious in studying and preaching the gospel, and in spreading, maintaining, and defending its pure unmixed doctrines: Let these be honourably maintained with double liberality, beyond such allowances as are to be granted to poor widows, (ver. 3.) according to their superior, and more important stations and work in the church, for the service of whose souls they spend their time and pains.

18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: and, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

18 For as this is equitable in itself; so the scripture points it out as your duty, where it says, to intimate the reward that is due to the servants of the Lord for their most important labours, (see the note on 1 Cor. ix. 10.) *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox, that treadeth out the corn*: And our blessed Lord himself says, with respect to his ministring servants, (Mat. x. 10.) *The workman is worthy of his meat*, as his reasonable reward.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

19 Another part of the *honour*, (ver. 17.) which is to be shown to these elders, is, that, considering their high post in the church, and the great consequence of supporting their character, in order to their usefulness, No accusation of any crime be admitted or believed, and brought into the church against any one of them; unless it be first substantially proved by, at least, two or three credible witnesses, which are required even in ordinary cases; (*Deut. xix. 15*; *Mat. xviii. 16*.) and it ought to be depofed in the presence of the like number of its members, to judge of the credibility of what is alledged against him, before the church takes any cognisance of it.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

20 But if, upon undeniable proof, elders themselves be found guilty of enormous crimes, inconsistent with their sacred character; In that case, there is to be no such respect of persons, as to connive at their faults; but you, as an evangelist, ought to reprove them, as well as any other member, for their sin, with all becoming authority, in the presence of the whole church, that not only they may reject them, in case of obstinacy and impenitence; but that others also, as well as these persons themselves, may be afraid of doing any iniquity for time to come.

21 I charge thee before God and the Lord

21 As these are things of vast moment for preserving the purity and prosperity of the church, and relating

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cause their pains were more than theirs that were fixed elders of certain churches: He also gives us another exposition, grounded on the use of the participle in the Greek, (*nowise*) which is often wont to note the reason of a thing thus, Let

elders that rule, or govern their flocks well, be counted worthy of double honour, and that chiefly because, or in respect of their labour in the word and doctrine. (See book i. discourse 19. Vol. I. pag. 92. of his works.)

Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

late to the most difficult, grievous, and irksome part of your work; and as your youth may make you the more backward to engage in it, I solemnly bind it upon your conscience, as in the presence of the all-seeing and heart-searching God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, who knows all things, and searches the heart and reins, (*Rev. ii. 23.*) and will judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and kingdom; (*2 Tim. iv. 1.*) and as in the presence of the blessed angels; who, continually surrounding us, are witnesses of what I say, and whom, in distinction from the fallen angels, God has chosen to be his favourite servants, and to be everlastingly confirmed in their holy and happy state*: Yea, I charge you, as you hope to appear with comfort before all these, at the great day, when our Lord shall *come in his own, and in his Father's glory, with all the holy angels*, that you carefully take heed to, maintain, and put in practice, the rules I have given you, without preferring one to another, through favour, or affection, or prejudging before the cause is heard and proved; and without the least partiality, through prejudice for, or against any man whatsoever, on account of his station in the church, or of any private consideration to bias your mind.

21 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

22 And as elders or pastors themselves may be liable to miscarriages, If you would rejoice to have as little occasion as possible, for the disagreeable work of rebuking them, (*ver. 20.*) It behoves you to be very cautious and careful in your inquiries after, and well satisfied about, the characters of such as propose to be introduced into that sacred office, and not hastily, inconsiderately, and rashly lay your hands on any man to ordain him †, with a conveyance of such extraordinary gifts, as used to attend that signal of them:

N O T E S.

* In whatever sense we understand this charge, as given *before the elect angels*, it relates to them, not as judges, but as witnesses, and is considered in the paraphrase both as given *before them*, according to the supposition of their being present in religious assemblies, who are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, *1 Cor. xi. 10. Eph. iii. 10. and Heb. i. 14.*: and as given to be answered before them at the judgment of the great day; when, for the greater solemnity of it, Christ will come with all the holy angels, as his glorious attendants, *Math. xvi. 27. and xxv. 31. Mark viii. 38. and Luke ix. 26.*

† Though conveying the gifts of the Spirit was ordinarily by the *apostles* laying on their hands; yet considering what an extraordinary evangelist Timothy was, according to special foregoing prophecies concerning him, which the apostle takes particular notice of, and seems to lay a great stress upon, once and again, *chap. i. 12. and iv. 14.* it need not be thought improbable, but that some more remarkably eminent powers were conferred upon him, than upon other evangelists: And why might not this of communicating the gifts of the Spirit at ordination, by laying on of his hands, be one of them?

them: Take heed of acting precipitately and unadvisedly herein, lest you make yourself accessory to, and so be partaker of, the guilt of unsound and ungodly ministers: Stand clear of the blame of countenancing such, and of all the sad consequences of their unfaithfulness, errors, and misbehaviour, that you in this, as well as in every other respect, may be *pure from the blood of all men.* (Acts xx. 26.)

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine of-
ten infirmities.

23 Here, by the way, let me, in the fulness of my heart's concern for you, give you one piece of tender and fatherly advice, relating to your own health, which ought to be consulted for the sake of usefulness, Though you are inclined, and undoubtedly obliged by your office, to be an example of all temperance and sobriety; yet, as your constitution is infirm and sickly, your labours great, and your life very important to the church of Christ, Do not confine yourself any longer, as, through too great abstemiousness, you have done in time past, to drink only water; but at proper seasons take a little wine in moderation, as may be needful to help your weak stomach, and decay of appetite and digestion, through the many indispositions and disorders of body that you are often attended with, by means of hard study, and fatiguing labour; and that threaten soon to put an end to your valuable life and services, for want of animal spirits and proper sustenance.

24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.

24 But to return: As to the cautions I have given, (*ver. 22.*) you are to proceed after a different manner in different cases, according to the evidence and reason of things. For some men's erroneous and sinful principles and practices are so notorious and open to every one's view, that they are thoroughly known before there be any occasion for a strict inquiry to be made into them; and so, easily lead the way to a just judgment of what is fit to be done in refusing to introduce them to office in the church: And there are others, who use so much art, secrecy, and hypocrisy, to conceal their sentiments and wickedness, that it often breaks out after a judgment of charity has been past upon them, in order to their being ordained: But whether it does so, or not, you have acquitted your own conscience, whatsoever be the consequence as to them*.

25 There

NOTE.

* The judgment here intended seems to be the final day of account, when God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil: (Eccles. xii. 14.) For there are no sins to be discovered after, but all will be made manifest in, that day: But I rather think that the judgment here meant is (as the context, *ver. 22.* directs) to be understood of the judgment, that is to be past, in just and charitable constructions, upon persons characters, with a view to their admission to the sacred office of the ministry.

25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

25 There are also some persons whose religious sentiments, gifts, graces, and moral temper and behaviour, are so remarkably good, and obvious to all about them, as to speak for themselves, before there is any need to scrutinize their characters; and they may be justly deemed fit to be admitted to the sacred ministry; in such cases your way is plain: But more caution is to be used as to others, who, though gracious upright souls, are so bashful and reclusive in their temper, that it is difficult to form a satisfying judgment about their qualifications; and yet, upon prudent, tender, and close converse with them, that good thing which is wrought in them, and the religion which is more covertly practised by them, may be sufficiently discovered to give you a favourable opinion of them, and to direct your proceedings towards them in the forementioned case: Or if, after all, you remain doubtful about them, it is best to wait; and if they really be corrupt in principle or practice, it cannot easily be concealed for any length of time.

RECollections.

With what veneration should the aged, whether men or women; and with what affability and purity should younger people, be cautioned against every sinful infirmity! The descendants of poor widows ought to treat them with respect, and provide as honourably for them, as they can. How unnatural, and how contrary to all the principles of Christianity, and worse than heathenish is it, for gospel-professors to neglect their destitute parents, and their own families! But if the offspring of poor widows are not able to maintain them, the church, to which they belong, ought to take them under their care: And if any church needs good matrons to attend their sick and poor, they may appoint such widows of advanced years to that service, as have obtained a good report, and shown a humble and compassionate regard to the saints and servants of Christ; but young widows ought not to be put into that office, lest, giving themselves up to pleasure, they become idle, tattling busy-bodies, which are the pest of society; and at length renounce their profession of faith, and, following the devices of Satan, throw off religious restraints, to their own condemnation; they are indeed in the worst sense dead, while they live: But as to poor *young* widows of better character, instead of their being burdensome to the church, it may be advisable for them to marry believing husbands, that are capable of maintaining them; and to bear and bring up such children in the fear of the Lord, as he may give them; as also to manage their household-business with good housewifery.—How solemn is the charge to all pastors, as well as evangelists, in the presence of God and Christ, and the holy angels, that they faithfully declare these things, and fulfil every part of their office! And though reproofs and censures are the most difficult and grievous duties of their station, yet they are to discharge them with fidelity, and without partiality, whether it be towards church-officers, or toward private members. But with what care and caution should they proceed in ordinations, lest they themselves share with the ordained in their guilt! And O what prudence, tenderness, and courage do they need for conducting, according to the appearances of some people's *ins* on one hand, and *good deeds* on the other, which show themselves before, or after they pass judgment upon them! How arduous, upon the whole, is the ministerial work! And how ought they, that are eminently laborious, in preaching and supporting the pure gospel of Christ, to be honoured with great respect, and liberal maintenance, according to the directions of both the Old and New Testaments! And though they ought to be temperate in all things, they need not confine themselves to drinking water; but may

may lawfully use wine with moderation for stomach's sake, when their labours and bodily infirmities call for it, and it becomes needful for the preservation of their health, and service in the church.

C H A P. VI.

The apostle lays down the duty of Christians toward believing, as well as other masters; which Timothy ought to insist upon, with a severe reproof to judaizers that taught otherwise, 1,—5. Shews the advantage of godliness with contentment, and the danger of covetous pursuits after riches, 6,—10. Directs Timothy to a contrary course, 11, 12. Gives him a solemn charge to behave faithfully in a persevering attention to his orders, and in admonishing the rich not to trust in their riches, but in the living God, and to improve his bounties to the best purposes; and repeats his charge with some enlargement, closing all with a short, but comprehensive benediction, 13,—21.

TEXT.

LET as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God, and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

PARAPHRASE.

AS there are some judaizers that would make it unlawful for bond-slaves, upon their becoming Christians, to obey their masters after the flesh*, Let all converted servants, even though they be under that yoke of servitude, think themselves in conscience bound to pay all civil respect and obedience, that is due to their own masters, whose property they are; and to serve them faithfully, even though they be heathens; by doing otherwise, they would prejudice the minds of their masters against, and bring a scandal upon the name of the blessed God, whom they profess to own and honour as their God, and upon his glorious and holy gospel, as if he had therein discharged them from the just obligations that they were under before, to perform the natural and civil duties of their stations; whereas his true design in it is, to make them better servants than ever, even to froward masters. (1 Peter ii. 18.)

1 And they that have believing masters, let them not

2 And those Christian-servants that are so happy as to have believing and faithful masters, ought to prize the privilege, and not condemn them, or make

B b 2

too

N O T E.

* As the Jewish Rabbies, thought it unlawful for an Israelite to be sold for a servant to heathens, (see Dr. Lightfoot's Heb. Talmud. Exercit. 1 Cor. vii. 23.) it is highly probable from ver. 3. of this chapter, that some judaizers insisted on the same for Christian-converts: But as this would have been to break in upon the civil rights, properties, and possessions, which Christianity leaves, as it

found them; (see the note on Eph. v. 21.) and would have been a strong prejudice in the minds of heathens against embracing the gospel, the apostle takes occasion to lay down the duty of Christian slaves, and therein of all other believing servants, to pay due honour and obedience to their masters, whatsoever their religious character be.

not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

too free with them, or think that they must be sunk, in their civil capacities, down to a level with themselves; and so withdraw their service from them, because they are brethren in Christ, and, as such, are upon a level with themselves in religious privileges, honours, and enjoyments, and in God's account: But let them, on the contrary, be the more chearful, affectionate, and diligent, in doing the business, and consulting the interest of such masters, for this reason; because they are faithful believers, beloved of God, and of their fellow-Christians, and are partakers of the spiritual blessings of the gospel with themselves, as well as have a right to the benefit of their good and faithful services. (*εὐεργετίας*) These are things so important to the credit of religion, and the preservation of natural rights, that I would have you publish and explain them, and excite to the practice them, on of all proper occasions.

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

3 If any one pretends to teach notions contrary to this, or to whatsoever else I have been insisting on, (see *chap. i. 3, 10.*) and does not embrace and submit to the sound, uncorrupted, and salutary doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, concerning his person and offices, as it hath been delivered in his own ministry, or by his inspired servants, who, as such, preach his word; (*Acts xix. 20.*) If any one do not give his assent and consent to the gospel-doctrine, which contains and enjoins, and is formed, designed, and blessed for promoting practical religion, in all devotion toward God, and in all relative duties toward men, on the foot of his authority, and with a good conscience towards him;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising,

4, 5 Such a man, be his pretences, profession, or station in the church what they will, is a haughty, self-conceited creature, (*τις*) puffed up with the vanity of his own mind, while he knows nothing aright of the truth of the gospel, or of what he ought to know, relating to God, and his own duty; but, like a brain-sick person, is foolishly and madly fond (*ισχυον*) of dealing in impertinent, useless, and entangling questions, (*chap. i. 4.*) and going into eager disputes and vain janglings about words, rather than things, in which he himself neither understands what he says, nor whereof he affirms; (*chap. i. 6, 7.*) and which are fit for nothing but to kindle and inflame envious and invidious thoughts and passions; angry debates; blasphemous imputations (*βλασφημίας*) and reviling speeches; sinful, injurious and groundless jealousies; preposterously curious, vain and froward bickerings, (*παραδιαιρέσεις*) that are practised and delighted in only by men, whose minds have taken a

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

perverse

perverse turn under the power of the reigning corruptions of their own hearts, and who are utter strangers to Christ, and to the truth of the gospel, and the true nature of vital religion; vainly imagining, that what they get most by, for securing and advancing their secular interest, is the best scheme of religion; and therefore they are for making a trade of it, and modeling Christianity itself to their own taste, in a way that may be most subservient to their carnal views. Have nothing to do with such perverse men; reject their principles, practices, and conversation; and withdraw as far from them as they have withdrawn from truth and holiness.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

6 But, whatever men of such corrupt and worldly spirits think of the matter, true religion in heart and life, which keeps up a solemn veneration of God, and an exercise of all suitable graces in worshipping and serving him, through Jesus Christ, by the assistance of his Spirit, according to the gospel; this evangelical godliness, together with an entire satisfaction, that gives a sufficiency to the mind itself, (*αὐταρκείας*) with regard to such things as we have, and to all disposals of Providence relating to the present life, is the best and truest, the most comfortable, advantageous, and abiding gain for this world and the next, incomparably preferable to all affluence of creature-enjoyments, which at best are empty, precarious, and perishing.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

7 For as we came naked into this world, bringing none of its good things along with us, and hold what we have of them by the free bounty and sovereign disposals of God, who may give or take them as he pleases; so it is unquestionably certain, that we must go out of it naked, as leaving them all behind us, and carrying none of them away with us, when we come to die; (*Job i. 21.*) and it is as certain, that *riches profit not in the day of wrath.* (*Prov. xi. 4.*)

8 And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

8 And if, while we are passing through this world, the good providence of God supplies us with necessary food to sustain us, and clothes and habitations (*οὐκιστοῦν*) to cover us, we ought not to be greedily, and ambitiously aspiring after more; but should be thankful for such mercies as we are favoured with, and so well pleased with them as to think we have enough.

9 But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

9 But they whose hearts are set upon riches, and resolve, if possible, to get them at any rate, as though they were their chief good, plunge themselves into the most dangerous temptations to unlawful ways of obtaining, and of using them; and into a dreadful snare to their own souls, which Satan and their carnal hearts lay for them; and into the deep defilement of

of many foolishly inconsiderate, mad, and pernicious appetites and passions, which they ought to be ashamed and afraid of; and which, like a great gulf, swallow up such worldly-minded men in both temporal and eternal destruction.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

10 For an inordinate value and affection for wealth is a pregnant source of all sinful, injurious, and miserable principles and practices *, which is sadly exemplified in some who, through unsatiable desires after the things of this world, have run astray from the truth of the gospel, and their profession of it; and, instead of finding the pleasure and advantage they proposed to themselves thereby, they bring distress and ruin upon themselves in soul and body, with as painful agony, in after reflections upon it, as if they had pierced themselves through with many sharp and poisonous darts.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

11 But as for you, O *Timothy*, who are a man highly favoured of God in the gifts and graces of his Spirit, set apart and devoted, by your own consent, to his service in the work of the ministry, Flee to the remotest distance with utter abhorrence, and with all your might, from these corrupt principles, dispositions, and practices, and every thing of this evil nature and mischievous tendency, as inconsistent with the dignity of your office, and your own happiness and usefulness; and, in opposition thereto, pursue vigorously, in the strength of divine grace, the richest attainments of the knowledge, experience, and exercise of righteousness, in all your behaviour toward men; of strict and evangelical piety, in all your actions toward God; of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in God through him, and of realizing views of the heavenly glory; of love to Christ, to the truth, and to his people for his sake; and, under the power of these, possess your own soul in patience, amidst all wants and troubles of this world, and sufferings for the gospel sake, and in an humble, gentle temper towards all men, (*Titus* iii. 2.) in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, (*2 Tim.* ii. 24, 25,) as far as is consistent with being valiant for the truth, which must not be given up through cowardice, on any terms whatsoever.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay

12 In this manner then, contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints; (*Jude* ver. 3.)

N O T E

- * Gold begets in brethren hate,
- Gold in families debate;
- Gold does friendship separate,
- Gold does civil wars create.

by hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

ver. 3.) Stretch yourself out with holy vehemence and eagerness, (*αγωνίζου*) as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, (2 Tim. ii. 3.) in this good fight against the flesh, the devil and the world, for a good Master, and in a good cause, which will have a good issue, as engaged in with an exercise of faith to derive strength from him for it, to support and animate you in it, to carry you through it, and bring you off with victory. Press therefore towards the mark for the prize, till, in a way of believing, and of all fidelity, you actually get possession of eternal life; unto the obtaining of which you are called by divine grace, and which is set before you in the gospel for your encouragement under all the hardships of your present warfare; (see the note on *Pbil.* iii. 12.) in your entrance on which, at your ordination, you made a noble confession of your faith in the presence of many witnesses, who attended that solemnity; and you have ever since bore an honourable testimony to it, by preaching and conversation, and by all the sufferings you have patiently endured for it, in the view of numerous spectators. (1 Cor. iv. 9.)

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

13 Now, with an eye to the greatest of all witnesses, of whom it most highly concerns us to be approved, I solemnly charge you in the name, and as it were before the face of the All-seeing and Almighty God, who is the Author of every kind of life; who raises dead souls to spiritual life, and revives them afterwards under all their decays, is the life of all our ministrations, and will raise the dead bodies of all his faithful servants and saints to immortal life and glory: I also charge you, as in the sight and presence of Jesus, the great Messiah, as you will answer it to him in the day of judgment, who, when he was arraigned, as an impostor, at the bar of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, bore a free and open testimony to the truth of his own character, (*Mar.* xxvii. 11. and *John* xviii. 37.) though he knew it would cost him his life; and so hath set you a noble example of courage and steadfastness in continuing to maintain the truth of the gospel concerning him, even unto death:

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

14 'Tis in the presence of these divine persons, that I give you this solemn charge to hold fast the ministerial trust committed to you by their command, and to follow the instructions I have given you by their authority, for executing it with all integrity, care, and diligence, and in all respects free from blame, *striving to shew yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;* (2 Tim. ii. 15.) and persevering therein to the end of life, in full expectation and hope

of

of the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, till he shall come to judge the quick and the dead at the last day. (2 Tim. iv. 1.)

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

15 Who appearance for this great purpose, he will demonstrate, in its proper and appointed season, * who, in opposition to all other gods, and all created beings, is blessed for ever in the enjoyment of himself, and is the only supreme and omnipotent Ruler over all kings and lords, and infinitely more excellent and glorious than any of them; they, and all that they are and have, being entirely dependent on his will and pleasure, and under his controul, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice. (Prov. viii. 15.)

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

16 Who only has an unbeginning and never-ending life of perfect blessedness and glory, originally, necessarily, unchangeably, and independently in himself; and dwells in such an illustrious *Shechina* in the heaven of heavens, as no mortal man can have access to; whom no man, in this state of imperfection and frailty, has ever seen, or can see in his full blaze of glory, and live; (Ex. xxxiii. 20.) nor can any corporal eye ever behold him in his divine nature, in which he is a purely spiritual being: To whom be ascribed all honour, might, and dominion, with chearful and profound adoration, as is most due, for ever and ever. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy:

17 In this view of things, and in reflection on the important trust thus solemnly committed to you, Give faithful admonitions, in the name of Christ, to those that abound in the riches of this world, to watch and pray, and take the utmost care, that they be not lifted up with pride, self-sufficiency, and contempt of others, on that account; nor set their hearts upon, or place their confidence in, their earthly possessions, which are all precarious and fleeting, and, when least expected, may make themselves wings and flee away: (Prov. xxiii. 5.) But teach them to put their entire trust in the only living and true God, who

N O T E.

* Some understand this as meant of *Jesus Christ*, because he is the next antecedent; accordingly they refer in his times to the season of his glorious appearing, when he will most illustriously demonstrate himself to be, what he witnessed concerning himself before Pontius Pilate: And it is certain that *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, is a title given to Christ, Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 16.; but I do not find that it is any where, unless here, given to the Father. However, it remains doubtful by the connection, whether this and the three following verses are to be referred to God the Father, or to our Lord Jesus Christ; but, which ever way it be considered, the *doxology*, ver. 16. to one of these persons, is not to the exclusion of the other; since the like is offered to the Father, Phil. iv. 20. to the Son, Rev. i. 5. 6. and conjunctly and equally to both, Rev. v. 13. (See the note on chap. i. 17.)

who daily loads us with his benefits, and who, in the riches of his mercy and goodness, gives us every thing for necessity, and many things for delight, yea, all things that we enjoy for present support and comfort, *pertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue.* (2 Pet. i. 3.)

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ;

18 Charge them also, as they will answer it at the great day of account, that, instead of abusing their riches, and mis-spending them lavishly upon themselves, they do all the good they can with them ; that they abound in better riches to their own and others advantage, even in every good work, which their affluence obliges them to, and makes them capable of ; that they be chearfully disposed of their own accord, on all proper occasions, to give liberally for promoting every good cause, and to be generous in communicating to the necessities of the poor, *especially of the household of faith.* (Gal. vi. 10.)

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

19 And let them know that they will heap up the best and most substantial of all treasures, to their own use and benefit, by their humble trust in God through Christ, the sincerity of which is proved by its fruitfulness unto all good works ; (*ver.* 17, 18.) and which, in opposition to uncertain riches, rests on a sure foundation of hope and happiness for the world to come, that, when they enter into it, they may actually lay hold on, and take possession of eternal life, as the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, (*Rom.* vi. 23. see the note there) and as the crown of life, which they shall receive at the end of their course, like the runners in the *Grecian* games, who, upon finishing their race, lay hold on the garland that is placed at the goal. (See the note on *Phil.* iii. 12.)

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called :

20 O my dear *Timothy*, Think seriously of these things ; and, in consideration of their vast importance, Take special care to preserve the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel pure and uncorrupted, and to exercise all your spiritual gifts in fulfilling your ministry, according to these directions ; all which are committed to you by the Lord Jesus Christ, as a sacred trust to be faithfully managed for him, and given an account of to him : And, that you may do this to the best advantage, keep yourself clear of, and utterly reject the impious, trifling, empty, and noisy talk of the judaizing teachers, and their oppositions to the true doctrine of Christ, by their corrupt notions of the law, which I have been cautioning you against ; but which they falsely call knowledge, though they

neither

neither know what they say, nor whereof they affirm.
(Chap. i. 4.—7.)

21 Which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

21 And so pernicious, as well as empty and vain, is their pretended knowledge, that some among them, who have been mighty fond of it, and prided themselves in it, have by that means run off from the faith of the gospel into gross errors. That you may be kept steady in the only true faith, and be abundantly assisted and succeeded in maintaining and promoting it, to the glory of God, and the salvation of your own and many others souls, May the divine love and favour ever attend and prosper you in your way and work, and thoroughly season your heart with every grace of the Spirit, *Amen*. So let it be, and so I trust it will be.

RECOLUTIONS.

What an honour and encouragement is it to believing servants, even of the lowest rank, that they are brethren in Christ, partakers of all spiritual blessings, equally with Christians of the highest civil stations! But what a reproach is it to the name of their God, and to his gospel, for them to be so conceited on this account, as to think themselves above paying the duty they owe to their earthly masters, even though they be infidels; or to be less, and not rather more, respectful and diligent in the service of religious masters, because they are brethren in the fellowship of the gospel! These things are to be taught and learned; and whoever, under false pretences to knowledge, suggest sentiments contrary to these, or to any other doctrine of Christ, which is a doctrine according to godliness, they are to be rejected, as persons, that are proud and ignorant, perverse and destitute of the truth, fond of vain opinions and disputations about words, which tend to strife and envy, railing and unwarrantable suspicions, and that make a trade of religion to serve their secular interests: But true godliness, with a satisfied mind as to worldly circumstances, though we have only necessary food and raiment, is the best of all gain; and therefore is to be cultivated in earnest pursuits after righteousness, goodness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. And, alas! What is this poor empty world, that we should set our hearts upon it! We brought none of its enjoyments into it, and whatsoever we have of them here, we must certainly, ere long, leave them all behind us: And they that will seek to be rich, right or wrong, throw themselves into many dangerous temptations, and foolish enluring lusts and passions, that will one time or other recoil upon them, and pierce them through with many agonizing sorrows; will make them err from the faith of the gospel; and plunge them into deep and endless ruin: For the love of money is the root of these, and numberless other sinful and destructive evils. How needful then is it, to warn the rich of this world to be humble amidst all their affluence; and not place their confidence in uncertain wealth, but in God, through Christ, who is a free and bountiful giver, of all things relating to this life and that which is to come! And how ready should they be to prove the sincerity of the profession of their faith, and trust in the Lord, by its genuine fruits in every good and charitable work; which will be laying in a good stock of solid happiness for the world to come, that, at the end of their Christian-course, they may receive the crown of life! O how conscientious and laborious should the servants of Christ be, in discharging every part of the ministerial trust that is committed to them; in maintaining the good profession they have made various ways before many witnesses; and in fighting the good fight of faith, till they lay hold on eternal life, at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ! And how mindful should they always be of the solemn bonds that are laid upon them, to adhere with fidelity to divine directions, as in the presence of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ! He courageously owned himself to be the true Messiah, before Pontius Pilate, and, at his second coming, will be gloriously manifested to be so, by the only living and life-giving God; who is the supreme almighty Governor, above all other kings and lords;

lords; who only has immortality essentially in himself, dwells in glory inaccessible to frail mortals, and is invisible in his own being: To whom be ascribed everlasting honour, dominion, and power, *Amen.* May all that love him unite in prayer for his ministering servants, that his free favour, in all its manifestations and effects, may perpetually enable them to be diligent and faithful in his work: *Amen.*

Cc 2

A PRAC.

A PRACTICAL
E X P O S I T I O N
OF THE
SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL
TO
T I M O T H Y,
IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E.

THE PREFACE TO THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

THIS Epistle is generally, and most probably, supposed from *chap. iv. 6.* and several other passages, to be the last that the apostle wrote under his second confinement at *Rome*, a little before his martyrdom there. It contains some further directions to *Timothy*, with a somewhat more immediate reference, than the former, (which is thought to have been wrote about nine years before) to his own *personal* conduct, in the discharge of his office, as an evangelist.

The apostle introduces it with the same salutation, and like affectionate expressions to him, and concern for him, as before; and with the like assertions of his character, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, for *Timothy's* encouragement, and for countenancing him against all the cavils of the *judaizers*, that would oppose him in fulfilling his trust, according to this and his former instructions: And to animate him the more in his work, and fortify him against the fear and shame of sufferings on account of his faithfulness therein, he sets before him the eternal salvation, and the discoveries of immortal life, that Christ has brought in by the gospel, together with his own chearfulness and undaunted courage, under his extreme sufferings for its sake; to which he adds grateful reflections on the behaviour of *Onesiphorus*, who had owned him, and had been a comfort to him, while others deserted him, *chap. i.* He therefore exhorts *Timothy* to keep up a constant and entire dependence on the grace of Christ; and, in its strength, to acquit himself with fidelity, in the discharge of his office; in bravely enduring all hardships and distresses for Christ, after the apostle's own example; in representing the importance, as well as the truth of the things he was to preach to others; as also in living in the doctrines he preached, and supporting them, with a becoming spirit, against the ungodly principles and practices of those that would subvert them, *chap. ii.* He then forewarns him of a particular

ticular sort of corrupt professors and preachers, whom he describes, and, in opposition to whom, he reminds *Timothy* of his own doctrine, manner of life, and behaviour under various persecutions; and enforces a steadfast adherence to divine revelation, whatever it might cost him, *chap. iii.* He likewise gives him a solemn charge to fulfil his ministry, with the utmost care and diligence, in consideration of the apostacies that would appear among many professing Christians, and of his having no further assistance from himself, who was going to seal his testimony with his blood, which he thought of with joy and triumph, as the crown of all his labours and sufferings: And concludes with expressions of earnest desire to see *Timothy*, as soon as possible; with an account of the different circumstances and behaviour of several persons whom he names; and with salutations, and his usual benediction, *chap. iv.*

C H A P. I.

Paul asserts his apostolic character, salutes Timothy, and expresses his great affection to him in remembrance of his sympathizing tears and unfeigned faith, 1,—5. Exhorts him to a diligent improvement of his spiritual gifts, without fear or shame on account of sufferings for Christ, who has brought life and immortality to light by the gospel; and to hold fast that blessed doctrine which was committed to him, 6,—14. And tells him of many that had basely deserted him, but speaks with honour and affection of Onesiphorus, for his kindness to him, 15,—18.

TEXT.

PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus;

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL, who is called and qualified to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the free and sovereign appointment and commission of God the Father, to bear witness to the once crucified, but now risen and exalted Saviour, and to preach him among Jews, and especially Gentiles, according to the promise of eternal life, which was given in Christ before the world began, (Tit. i. 2.) and in due time was made to Abraham and his spiritual seed, as to be fulfilled in him, in whom all nations were to be blessed; (Gen. xxii. 18.) which life is repositied in him, purchased and dispensed by him, and obtained through faith in him. (1 John v. 11, 12.)

¹ To Timothy my dearly beloved son: grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

² Even I Paul send greeting to you, my dearly beloved son Timothy. (See the note on 1 Tim. i. 2.) May the free favour and tender compassion, with all their happy manifestations, fruits, and effects, (see the note on Rom. i. 7.) and all manner of prosperity for soul and body, time and eternity, abound toward you from God the Father, as the first mover in our salvation, and from Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine, as concurring

concurring with him therein, and as the purchaser and giver of all blessings, in the execution of his mediatorial office.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day:

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy:

3 I heartily render thanks and praise to God, whom I religiously worship and adore after the manner of my progenitors, even the only true God, whom *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and all my pious ancestors served; and this I now do with a heart purified by faith and a conscience purged from dead works by the blood of Christ. (*Acts* xv. 9. and *Heb.* ix. 14.) I bless his holy name, that, though in the days of my *Judaism*, I was dreadfully misguided by corrupt passions and prejudices, I now in love to him, and to you his faithful servant, am continually mindful and make mention of you, as in all solemn addresses to the throne of grace *, so particularly in my morning and evening prayers, which I constantly offer up every day, as the *Jews* were wont to do at the time of their morning and evening sacrifice, and as is an incumbent duty for all Christians to practise day by day, as their reasonable service.

4 And so ardent is my affection to you, that (if it be the will of God) I am exceedingly desirous of seeing you, once more, before my death, which is now at hand, (*chap.* iv. 6.) that I may have the pleasure of your company, and an opportunity of leaving with you some farther instructions, as occasions may require, and as the dying charge of a tender parent to his most beloved son. And there are two things, among others, that so greatly endear you to me, and would fill me with the more abundant joy in seeing you again; one is the touching reflection I make upon the affectionate, filial, and moving flood of tears †, which you poured out at our last parting,

NOTES.

* *Prayers night and day* seems most immediately to relate to the morning and evening prayers which used to be offered up by the *Jews* at the time of their morning and evening sacrifice, *Exod.* xxix. 38, 39. compared with *Luke* i. 10.: And these are undoubtedly proper seasons of stated solemn addresses to God with thanksgivings for the mercies of the night, or of the day past, and with humble supplications, and commitments of ourselves and all our own and others concerns to the Lord, for the mercies of the day, or of the night, that is coming on. And yet they are not to be restrained to these stated seasons; but are likewise to be presented to God on all suitable occasions, and especially in important circumstances and turns of

life, relating to spiritual and temporal things. (See Dr. *Whitby's* note on *1 Thess.* v. 17.)

† These tears were manifestly those which *Timothy* shed at the apostle's last parting with him; and it is thought by many, that he refers to that melting leave which the *Ephesian* elders took of the apostle, *Acts* xx. 37, 38. among whom *Timothy* is supposed to have been present, and wept most abundantly: But as it is uncertain whether he were in that company, or not; and as that seems to have been about nine or ten years before the writing of this epistle, the apostle had probably seen him since that time; and therefore the parting, here referred to, was in all likelihood on some latter occasion; though the history

on account of the danger I was like to be exposed to, and which made a deep impression on my soul then, and, at times, ever since.

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

5 The other thing that thus engages my heart to you, is, the lively sense I retain of that sincere faith which you have manifested on all occasions to be in you, without the least appearance of hypocrisy, or disguise; (*αυτοαληθης*) even that same sort of faith, which was not only professed by, but discovered itself to be seated, as an active and abiding principle, in the heart, first of your pious grandmother Lois, as also in your no less truly religious mother Eunice, who believed in the promised Messiah, and afterwards embraced him upon the gospel-revelation of him; and I am fully satisfied, from what I have seen and known of you, that the like undissembled faith is planted also in your own heart; and so God's covenant with believers and their seed is remarkably fulfilled in your mother and you.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

6 Therefore in my great affection to you, and in consideration of the extraordinary favour, which God has still further shown in most eminently fitting you for ministerial service, I now write to you again, to remind you of my former exhortation, that you may not be remiss in cherishing and improving the spiritual gifts, which he has freely bestowed upon you, and which still remain in you; but, like one that would blow up live-coals, when covered with ashes, into a flame, may, (*αναφωτισεις*) by diligent meditation, reading and prayer, stir up and kindle those gifts into a sacred fervor and activity, which God has remarkably honoured you with, by means of the imposition of my own and others hands, as the signal of his conveying them to you, at your ordination. (See the paraphrase on 1 Tim. iv. 14.)

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

7 You ought by no means to be discouraged in the exercise of those gifts, on account of the opposition of your adversaries: For the temper and disposition, which God by his spirit has formed in us, whom he hath called and fitted for holy ministrations, is not a spirit of cowardice and dread of our enemies, whether men or devils; but is a spirit of holy fortitude and undaunted courage to encounter all difficulties and dangers; and of fervent love to Christ and his cause, and to immortal souls; and of sobriety and good judgment, (*σωφρονισμος*) in a due government of our passions, and in stedfastly adhering to, and patiently suffering for, the true gospel of Christ.

8 Let

NOTE

of the *Acts*, which is supposed to have ended six or seven years before this epistle was wrote, gives us no account of it.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God;

8 Let therefore such considerations as these carry you above all shame, discouragement, or faint-heartedness, in bearing a noble and open testimony to our blessed Lord and Saviour, and to his gospel, in which he gives testimony unto himself, as he is its principal subject, and which he owns with the power of his Spirit; and let the same thoughts fortify you against being ashamed to own, vindicate, and visit me in my bonds, as his apostle and prisoner: But let them, on the contrary, animate you to sympathize with me in my persecutions, and to be ready to endure the same yourself with all chearfulness for the gospel's sake, in humble dependence upon the mighty assistance which God by his Spirit will give you, to strengthen and enable you to suffer patiently, on account of your firm attachment to it. And well may we chearfully submit to all tribulations, dangers, and reproaches, for the honour and glory of God;

9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began,

9 Who has provided a Saviour for us, and given us to him to take care that we might not be cut off in our sins, and *has appointed us to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*, (1 Theff. v. 9.) who has already purchased it for us; and in consequence of all this, God has effectually called us, by the gospel, to holiness here, in order to our being fitted for, and brought to the possession of perfect happiness for ever hereafter: (2 Theff. ii. 13, 14.) All which he has done, not as influenced to it by any foresight of our good works, as though we should ever deserve it; but entirely of his free favour, according to his own sovereign intention and resolution, and the mere unmerited kindness of his own gracious heart, which was set upon us, and had a special regard to us, in Christ our head, from all eternity, before the foundation of the world, (Ephes. i. 4.) and which began to dawn in the first promise, (Gen. iii. 17.) before the Jewish ages*.

10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ,

10 But which gracious purpose, that lay from all eternity as a secret in his own bosom, and was afterwards in great measure concealed under the types and shadows of the Old Testament, is now evidently discovered,

N O T E

* I have taken in the notion which Mr. Locke and others have given of the words *before the world began*, as signifying *before the secular ages of the Jews*. (*απο χρόνου αἰώνων*) But as the purpose of God was certainly from eternity, and the word (*αἶων*) often signifies *the world*, and is used plurally, as for ages, so for *the worlds*, (Heb. i. 2.) and as the phrase (*απ' αἰώνος*) evidently signifies

from the *beginning of the world*, or from *the beginning of time*, Luke i. 70. and Acts iii. 21. Why should not the like phrase (*απο χρόνου αἰώνων*) signify also *before the beginning of the world*, or of *all time or ages*, and be in sense the same with *before the foundation of the world*, as that is often used to signify *from all eternity*?

Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

covered, with illustrious brightness, by the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose appearance in flesh and in the execution of his mediatorial office, has, like that of the rising sun, (*επιφανους*) scattered Jewish and Heathen darkness; who in virtue of his dying for our sins in our nature and in our stead, and of his rising, as a conqueror, from the grave, has taken away the sting of death, broke its power, and turned it into a blessing, instead of a curse, to them that believe in him, and delivered them from eternal death; (1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57.) and who has made a plain revelation of a blessed life, and immortal glory of soul and body in the heavenly world, by means of the gospel, which shows us the certainty, together with the sublime, excellent, and spiritual nature of that state, and our way of arriving at it through him.

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

11 This is a blessed and glorious gospel indeed, for the dispensation of which I, like a herald sent to proclaim peace by Jesus Christ, am appointed and constituted an authentic publisher, (*αγγελος*) and an apostle, to bear witness to a crucified and risen Saviour, by immediate commission from him, and that with a particular relation to the *Gentiles*, (Acts ix. 15.) as a preacher to them, that they may hear and believe the glad tidings of eternal life to the saving of their souls.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

12 And it is for my faithfulness and zeal in discharging this office, and that particularly to them, that I now actually suffer all the disgrace and severities of my present imprisonment, and am daily expecting martyrdom itself: But, in consideration of the glorious excellency of this cause, I am so far from being ashamed of Christ and his gospel, or of my sufferings for them, that I glory in them, and have the most joyful expectation of a happy issue of all in a better world: For I well know, in the light of God's word and Spirit, and upon long trial and experience, what a gracious, all-sufficient, faithful and divine Saviour he is, whom I have received and relied upon by faith; and I am fully satisfied, on the surest grounds, that he has all power and authority in his office-capacity, which includes his will, to secure my soul, with all its eternal concerns, that I have entrusted him with, as my most important *depositum*, to take care of* against the day of the final judgment, which

may

NOTE.

* That which I have committed to him against that day, is understood by some to mean the gospel-doctrine, and by others the church of Christ, which was committed to the apostle's trust. But, how great and important a truth

forever there be in either of these sentiments, they do not seem fully to agree with the apostle's design in this place, nor with the form of expression here used: For he proposes this, as an encouragement to Timothy, not to be asha-

med

may be emphatically called *that day*, as it is the concluding day at the end of time, and the day, in which every one will be more concerned than in any other day whatsoever, as his condition, for happiness, or misery, will then be solemnly, publicly, and unalterably decided for eternity.

13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

13 Whatever trials therefore you meet with, as may be expected in the cause of Christ; see to it, that, encouraged by my example of faith, patience, and hope in sufferings, you keep in memory, stedfastly adhere to, and resolutely maintain (*υποτυποσιν υγιανοντων λογων*) the pattern, or platform of the uncorrupted, wholesome, nourishing and healing doctrine of the gospel, that is contained in those words of truth and soberness, which you have been taught by me, in conversation, preaching and writing, with respect to faith in Christ, and love to him, and to all fellow-Christians for his sake*; and which you received, with a firm persuasion of their truth and reality, as *faithful sayings*, and embraced with cordial affection, as *worthy of all acceptation*; which you are also to preach with fidelity and love, as wrought and excited in you toward Jesus, the anointed head and Saviour of the church, and by supernatural influence from him.

14 As

NOTES.

med of the testimony of our Lord, nor of his prisoner, but to submit cheerfully to sufferings for Christ and the gospel's sake, *ver. 8.*: And a consideration of the blessed advantage, that he should have from Christ at the great day, was much more proper to enforce this, than a consideration that Christ would take care of his own church and cause, whether Timothy laboured in it, or suffered for it, or not: And the apostle calls it *his own depositum*, (*την παραθετην μου*) which he committed to Christ, that he might receive it again with safety; but *the gospel and the church of Christ* are not the property of, nor are to be given back again to, any minister or apostle as his *own*. The *noun*, (*παραθετην*) here used, occurs no where else in the New Testament; but the *verb* (*παρατιθημι*) is several times used for committing *persons* to God, as in *Acts* xiv. 23. and xx. 32.; and the apostle's act of faith here, amidst troubles and dangers, and near prospects of death and eternity, was like that which our Lord himself exercised towards his Father, in his expiring moments, saying, (*Luke* xxiii. 46.) *Father, into thine hand I commend* (*παραθησμαι*) *my spirit*; and was such an act

of faith as the apostle Peter speaks of, (*1 Epist.* iv. 19.) *Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit* (*παραισθεσθαι*) *the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator*. This commitment of the soul to Christ *against that day*, evidently means against the day of judgment, when the life and immortality, which the apostle had been speaking of, *ver. 10.* shall be enjoyed in all perfection and glory, which will be at the day of Christ's second appearing, *Col.* iii. 4. and *Heb.* ix. 28. This is the day that the apostle had in view, and refers to again and again, in this epistle, under apprehensions of the near approach of death, as in *ver. 18.* and *chap.* ii. 10, 11, 12. and iv. 1, 8, 18. This is sometimes called, by way of emphasis, *the day of Christ*, (*Phil.* i. 6, 10.) *the day*, (*1 Cor.* iii. 13.) and *that day* here, and in several other places, and *the great day*, (*Jude.* *ver.* 6.) and *the day of judgment* very often.

* *Faith and love* may relate either to the doctrines received, or to the manner of Timothy's receiving and preaching them.

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

14 As to that momentous trust and treasure, inclusive of your spiritual gifts, and of the doctrine of the gospel, and your office as a minister to preach it, which is excellent in itself, and good for the use of edifying your own and others souls, to the glory of God and their salvation, and was committed by the Lord Jesus Christ to you at your solemn ordination; see that you be faithful in maintaining it against all the efforts of your enemies, and in preserving it pure and uncorrupted, with religious care and diligence, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who permanently resides with peculiar relation and influence, and by his gifts and graces, in you and me, as he ever does, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, (*Eph. iv. 7.*) in all true believers and faithful ministers, (*John xiv. 16, 17.*) to enable us to fulfil the duties of our stations, in the face of all opposition and danger.

15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

15 You ought to be the rather excited to all faithfulness and diligence in these things, as you cannot but know, that the generality of the *Asiatic* professors of Christ's name * have shamefully deserted me in my present sufferings for his sake, as being afraid, or ashamed to own and stand by me in them: Of this sort *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes* are notorious instances.

16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.

16 However, in this time of so great defection, I have not been left utterly destitute of friends, for whom I heartily bless God, and implore his blessing; as particularly my earnest desire and prayer is, that the Lord, who *with the merciful will shew himself merciful*, (*Psal. xviii. 25.*) would multiply mercies of every kind, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, upon the family of *Onesiphorus*, † in return for the mercy he hath shown to me: For, notwithstanding the cowardice of pretended friends, and the fury of open enemies, he, with a truly Christian courage and compassion, has often relieved and comforted me in my distress, (*and visits*) by seasonable visits and supplies of things

D d 2

N O T E S.

* *They which are in Asia* are supposed by some to mean, such as lived in *Asia*, and by others, such as were natives of *Asia*, but at this time were at *Rome*; the last of which seems most probable to me, but the paraphrase has left it undetermined.

† It seems from *ver. 18.* compared with *chap. iv. 19.* that *Onesiphorus* was an inhabitant of *Ephesus*, as the place of his usual abode, where his family dwelt, but from which he was now absent, being very probably still at *Rome*, for

which reason his family, without mentioning him, is spoken of here, and saluted, *chap. iv. 17.*: But I can see no force in what *Grotius* and *Estius* offer for their supposition that he *was dead*: All that the apostle says about him has a contrary aspect; and therefore *Estius's* conclusion from hence, that prayers are to be offered for departed saints, is built upon a mere conjecture, without any solid foundation. (*See Hammond's note on the place.*)

things convenient for me, which have been like a cooling breeze to refresh me in the heat of my tribulations; and so great was his affection to me, and to the glorious cause for which I suffer, that he was not ashamed to own me, or it, under all the ignominy and reproach that attend my chain, by which I am held, as a prisoner of the Lord, in order to my being put to death.

17 But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

17 But when he came to Rome, he was so far from being shy of appearing to have any concern with me, that he took great pains to inquire where, and in what prison, or in what ward I was shut up; and did not rest till he had found me out, and got access to me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

18 O may the Lord Jesus, for whose sake this his servant has been so exceeding compassionate, kind, and useful to me under my sufferings, may he, and God the Father, in the riches of his grace through him, return it manifold into his own bosom, not only in this world, but especially in the world to come, that he himself may find mercy of the great Lord and Judge of all, to be owned of him before his Father and the Holy angels, when the *times of refreshing shall come from his presence*; (Acts iii. 19.) and to be publicly adjudged to eternal life, according to the greatness of his mercy, (Jude, ver. 21.) at the great day of account, (see the note on ver. 12.) that final, most important and decisive of all days, for a succeeding eternity! Gratitude demands my best wishes for such a fast friend, who still approves himself to be so to the last, in the very worst of times: And you very well know, and I cannot forget, in how many instances of great kindness he formerly assisted and refreshed me, by various means, under all my troubles, when I was at Ephesus.

RECOLUTIONS.

Shall an inspired apostle commit the true doctrine of Christ to ministers, by immediate commission from God? And shall they not keep it pure and uncorrupt, and be ready to suffer for it, in dependence on his power, as exerted by the Holy Spirit? Or shall they preach it, and the people not regard it? What a contempt is this of divine authority, and of the glorious gospel, at once! But O happy souls, that serve God with a pure heart, and receive the gospel with unfeigned faith and love, after the example of religious ancestors; and lay themselves out to propagate it, in like manner to others! It contains the promise of everlasting life through Jesus Christ; opens the eternal purpose of God about the salvation of his people; is a means of their effectual calling; assures the believer that the sting and power of death are vanquished for him; and sets the immortal life of soul and body, and the way of obtaining it, in the clearest light. Who would not be contented to undergo the severest persecutions, without fear, or shame, for the sake of the rich advantages that are to be hoped for from it! May we have the firmest confidence in Christ, as the all-sufficient Saviour, to secure the great concerns of our souls, that we commit by faith to his care, against the great day of account!—How dear is one sincere servant of Christ to another, as partakers of the same faith, and embarked

arked in the same noble cause! How greatly do they all need; and how heartily do they wish, and daily pray for grace, mercy, and peace to be multiplied to one another, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ! How affectionately are they desirous of each other's company, especially in times of great tribulation! How tenderly do they sympathize one with another in their afflictions! How concerned are they that a due improvement be made of the gifts of the Spirit, which are graciously bestowed upon their brethren in the ministry, who are endowed, according to the spirit of the gospel, not with a timorous, cowardly temper, but with holy fortitude and love, sobriety, wisdom and sound judgment, for fulfilling their trust, in the midst of all difficulties, opposition and danger! And while many desert the cause of Christ, and his suffering servants, like *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes*, blessed be God, there are others, who, like *Onesiphorus*, are not ashamed to own them in the worst of times; but are willing to seek opportunities of shewing all possible regard to them. May the Lord be gracious to such and their families; and grant them mercy to eternal life in the day of judgment.

C H A P. II.

The apostle directs Timothy to the grace that is in Christ for all spiritual strength, 1. Exhorts him to take care that there be a succession of faithful ministers, and to persevere in his own work, with constancy and diligence, like a soldier, a combatant, and a husbandman, encouraging him hereunto by his own example, and assurances of a happy issue of his faithfulness, 2,—13. Advises him to guard against striving about unprofitable and pernicious words, and to study to approve himself to God, warning him to shun vain babblings and dangerous errors, that eat like a canker, as in the instances of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, and comforts him with the thought, that nevertheless the foundation of God stands sure, 14,—19. Tells him that several sorts of professors are to be expected in the church, as various sorts of vessels are used in a great house, 20, 21. And charges him to flee youthful lusts, and to manage the whole of his conversation, ministry, and zeal against error, with a becoming meekness of spirit, as most likely to be successful, 22,—26.

TEXT.

THOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

PARAPHRASE.

CONSIDERING therefore the things that have been mentioned, (*chap. i. 15,—18.*) and the danger of taking a wrong part in them, let me entreat you, my dear son in the faith, fellowship, and ministry of the gospel, not to be self-confident, or trust in the grace you have already received, which, left to itself, would soon fail; but to have a constant recourse, and go out of yourself to the fountain of all grace, that you may be *strong in the Lord and in the power of his might*; (*Ephes. vi. 10.*) may keep up an entire dependence on the inexhaustible fund of grace that is treasured up in Christ, your head, and in the free favour of God, as residing, manifesting, and exhibiting itself in him; and may continually receive of his fulness grace for grace. (*John i. 16.*)

1 And the things that

2 And, setting out in this strength for the discharge

that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

charge of every duty, and for propagating the true doctrines of the gospel, which I received by immediate revelation, and communicated to you, and in a public solemn manner committed to your trust, at your ordination, in the presence of many witnesses, * according to the numerous testimonies that are given to them by the law and the prophets, (*Rom. iii. 21.*) take heed that you transmit them pure and uncorrupted, just as you received them from me, to such other ministers, as approve themselves to be faithful believers, that have the glory of Christ, the truth of the gospel, and the good of souls at heart, and are well furnished with knowledge and utterance, gifts and graces, to dispose and qualify them for explaining, proving, defending, and applying the whole counsel of God to their hearers.

3 As this is the noblest of all services, spare no pains, nor be afraid of any difficulties, or dangers, you may be exposed to in it; but consider that as you are in a state of warfare, attended with many sufferings and hardships, in the way to victory and triumph; so you ought to acquit yourself with holy resolution, vigour, and courage, like a good soldier that fights as a volunteer in the cause, and under the banner of Jesus Christ, the Captain of salvation, who is able to support you under, and carry you through, all your toils and troubles, and crown them with everlasting honours.

4 According to the obligations of this character, you should give yourself wholly to the work of the ministry: (*1 Tim. iv. 15.*) For you know that, by the *Roman* laws, no man that lifts, as a soldier, into the imperial army, is allowed to spend his time, and involve himself, in the common business of trade, husbandry, or other secular employments; but is to devote himself entirely to the duty of his military station, that he may diligently fulfil the orders of his general, and be approved of him who has taken him upon the muster-rolls: In like manner you, as a minister of Christ, ought not to follow civil callings to entangle your thoughts, and swallow up your time; but to apply them to spiritual exercises in the service of Christ, your sovereign Lord and King, that you may acquit yourself agreeable to his will, who has appointed, called, and authorised you to fight the good fight of

N O T E.

* Among many witnesses, (*δια πολλων* here; yet, as this is an exceeding rare construction, I have taken in both this, and the other most common sense of the preposition.

i. 8. and *Gal. iii. 19.* and is so rendered

of faith, till you lay hold on eternal life. (1 Tim. vi. 12.)*

5 And if a man also strive for martiries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.

5 And as ministers are called to various sorts of conflicts, (*Acts* xx. 22, 23, 24. and *Phil.* iii. 12, 13, 14.) if any man enter the lists, like a combatant in the *Grecian* games, he is never reckoned a victor, nor crowned as such, unless he keep to the stated rules of those exercises, which require great pains in running, wrestling, and the like; so you, who have entered into Christ's service, are to exert yourself with labour and diligence, for overcoming all opposers, in his way and work, according to the prescriptions of his word, as ever you expect that, *when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away.* (1 Pet. v. 4.)

6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

6 As ministers are also compared to labourers in the Lord's harvest, or vineyard, (*Luke* x. 2. and xx. 9, &c.) you know that the husbandman must take much pains in plowing and sowing, or in digging and planting, and must do this with patience for some length of time, before he can have a good crop, that he may gather the fruits of the earth; so you are to be laborious in preaching the gospel for the glory of Christ, and the good of souls, and to wait with patience before-hand for the coming of the Lord, that you may *rejoice in the day of Christ, that you have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.* (James. v. 7. and *Phil.* ii. 16.)

7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

7 Pray consider seriously what I deliver to you under these figures, that you may look upon yourself, and behave, as a soldier, a combatant, and a husbandman, in the work of the Lord; and may reckon upon hardships and labour in attending the services which belong to persons of all those characters; and at the same time may maintain a comfortable hope of a blessed and gracious reward at the end of them all: For in this way of reflecting on these things, the Lord, as I trust and heartily wish, † will further enlighten

NOTES.

* In this and the next verse, there is *mont*, and other good copies, (*Vid. Mil.* a plain allusion to the *Roman* law of in loc.) *the Lord will give thee understanding*, and to that of the *Grecian* games; *standing*: (*δοσι*) But if we retain the common reading, yet, as Dr. *Whitby* observes, (*δοσι*) *give* is often used for (*δοσι*) *will give*; and as the particle (*υαε*) here rendered *and*, very rarely, if ever, bears that sense: but is a casual particle, and signifies *for*. I have considered it in that view, and yet glanced at the other, since it does not appear to be

† *The Lord give thee understanding*, expletive in this place, as it sometimes is (*δοσι*) is in the *Alexandrian*, *Clare-* in others.

lighten your mind in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, (*Col. i. 9.*) to make a right judgment and application of them, and so impress upon your own heart a deep and abiding sense of your duty in this, and all things else that concerns you, as a Christian, or a minister of Jesus Christ.

8 Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel:

8 The grand article which I would have you constantly bear in mind, for your own support and encouragement under your trials and sufferings, and remind others of in your preaching, for their conversion and establishment in the faith and hope of the gospel, is, that Jesus the anointed Saviour, who according to the flesh proceeded from the loins of the famous patriarch *David*, having suffered unto death, as a sacrifice for sin, was raised again from the dead for our justification, (*Rom. iv. 25.*) according to the glad tidings of salvation, that I have preached and confirmed in my ministry, which indeed is not my gospel, as though I were the author of it, but a dispensation of which is committed unto me. (*1 Cor. ix. 17.*)

9 Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

9 This is a great and fundamental truth, for the preaching of which to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, I undergo the severest persecutions, even to confinement, in which I am held in bonds, as though I were a malefactor; not fit to live, and so am prevented publicly preaching it, as I used to do, and, were it the will of God, would still gladly persist in; But, blessed be his name, his word is not confined, or shut up in a corner, or hindered from being proclaimed and made effectual in many places, by others of his servants, for bringing in multitudes of souls to Christ; and it is further confirmed by the testimony I give to the power of divine grace in my patient and joyful sufferings for it.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

10 The thought of what has been already, and will still further be done by the power of God, as attending the ministrations of the gospel, is such a comfort to me, that I cheerfully submit to all the distresses that are, or can be laid upon me, in love and zeal for the spiritual welfare of those whom God hath from the beginning chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, (*2 Thess. ii. 13.*) that they, encouraged by my example, may also be induced to believe, cordially embrace, and boldly profess the truth and excellence of the gospel, notwithstanding the violence of the times; and may, in this way of God's appointment, arrive at an actual possession of that salvation, which consists, not only in an entire freedom from all evil; but likewise in the complete enjoyment of an eternal inheritance of

all possible honour and delight, that is purchased by, and reserved in Christ for them who *are called by the gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (2 Thess. ii. 14.)

11 *It is a faithful saying, For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him :*

11 This doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection, and of the future glory of the elect, who are, or shall be brought to believe in him, is certainly true ; and, for the comfort of his suffering servants, may be fully depended upon : For if, in conformity to the crucified *Jesus*, and by virtue derived from him, as the head with whom we are vitally united, we be dead to sin and to this world, and willing to lose our mortal lives for his sake ; we also, in conformity to him, and by the power of his resurrection, shall certainly be quickened and raised to a glorious immortality, to live in the heavenly world with him. (See *John* xii. 25, 26. *Rom.* viii. 17. and *1 Pet.* iv. 13.)

12 *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him : if we deny him, he also will deny us :*

12 If we patiently endure reproach and all manner of tribulation for Christ's sake, like what he himself underwent for ours, we shall also be exalted to the dignity of sitting with him on his throne, as *kings and priests to God and his Father :* (Rev. i. 6. and iii. 21.) If, on the contrary, any of us, who profess to be his disciples and servants, are so terrified with fear of suffering the loss of worldly honour, ease, and enjoyments, or of liberty, or life itself, as to deny the truth of the gospel, and cast off our profession of him, or to be ashamed to own him and his cause, and either doctrinally or practically deny him, he will also be ashamed of us, and deny that he ever knew or approved of us, *when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.* (Luke ix. 26. and xii. 8, 9.)

13 *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful ; he cannot deny himself.*

13 Whether we believe this comfortable truth on one hand, or this awful denunciation on the other, or not ; yet he who has peremptorily assured us of both in his word, and is the *Amen*, the faithful and true Witness, will certainly perform his gracious promises to them that believe in, and own him ; and will execute his just threatnings upon apostates : It is not consistent with the perfections, veracity, and immutability of his nature and will, to act contrary to his settled declarations of mercy and judgment, with regard to his final proceedings in the great day of account ; for this would be as impossible for him to do, as to deny that he is God, and the impartial Judge of all.

14 *Of these things put them in remembrance, charging*

14 Remind those that you minister to, and introduce into the ministry, of these important things on which their salvation depends, and which it behoves them to regard above all things else ; and

charging *them* before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers.

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying, That the resurrection is past already; and overthrow

charge them in the name, by the authority, and as in the presence of the Lord Jesus, as ever they will answer it to him at his coming to judgment, that they do not, instead of attending to these substantial and interesting things, go into warm, or trifling disputations about empty words, like *Jewish* fables, and genealogies, (1 Tim. i. 4.) which are of no manner of advantage to religion and godliness; but tend to puzzle and pervert the minds of hearers, and turn them off from the truth of the gospel.

15 Let it be your great study and endeavour, by help from heaven, to present, or yield yourself an approved servant to God, that you may be like a good workman, who has no occasion to be ashamed on account of neglect, unskilfulness, unfaithfulness, or any other remarkable defect; and that, as the *Jewish* priests were very careful and exact in cutting up, and separating the several parts of the sacrifices, that were, or were not to be offered; so you may use the utmost care and good judgment, in separating between truth and error, important and trifling things; and in giving to every one a portion of God's word in due season, with a proper application of its various parts to the circumstances of your hearers; and (*εὐδοκίμως*) in cutting out before them the right way of truth, holiness, and happiness, by preaching and example, according to the gospel of Christ.

16 But be sure to avoid, oppose, and turn away from all irreverent, defiling, and noisy, but daring and empty discourse, that degrades the nature and perfections of God, and the purity of the gospel, which too many go into: For such ways of talking will tend unto, and such talkers themselves will by that means go, still further and further, into errors and practices, that are contrary to true religion, and are like to issue in the height of all impiety.

17 And their doctrine will be infectious to others, as well as injurious to their own souls: For, if it be let alone, it will spread in the church, and eat out the vitals of religion; even as a gangrene, when it is got into any part of the flesh, eats it away, by degrees, to the destruction of the whole body, and of life itself. Among such pernicious and ungodly talkers, there are two notorious ones, *Hymeneus*, (1 Tim. i. 20.) and *Philetus* by name;

18 Who have given themselves up to such profane and vain babbling, (*ver. 16.*) as has at length carried them off from the truth of divine revelation, and into the most destructive errors, relating to the true doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; they affirming that, whatsoever Christ, or any of the sacred

throw the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

cred writers have said about a proper resurrection, it is to be taken in some mystical or figurative sense, that is over-past already in this world*, and not in a literal sense, as though there were to be a real resurrection of the body in the world to come: And by their bold and subtle assertions, and arguings on this point, they have so far prevailed, as to turn some off from that, and every other sound doctrine, which they before professed to believe.

19 But notwithstanding all this, the fundamental doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is certainly the truth of God, he having set his seal to it by testifying his approbation of the apostles, as his faithful servants, whom he inspired and commissioned to preach it. And notwithstanding such melancholy instances of apostates, which often occasion fears to arise in the hearts of some sincere believers, lest their faith should be also overthrown, and they should fall after the example of others, that seemed to be much greater proficients in Christianity than themselves; yet the ground of security to God's elect, (*ver. 10.*) and of an assured hope, that their faith, who are built upon Christ as a foundation, and have a principle of grace, as a ground-work of salvation, shall be answered, and that all the promises of the gospel abide firm and steady, † lies in the eternal and unchangeable purpose of God; it having this *motto*, engraven, as it were on a seal, to confirm the decree, and to signify the safety, secrecy, and appropriation of the objects of his love; Whatsoever becomes of others, that make fair pretences to religion, the Lord in a distinguishing manner affectionately knows, and everlastingly owns them, whom he hath chosen for himself, and claims as his peculiar property, (see the note on *Rom. viii. 30.*) that he may keep them by his power through faith unto salvation: (*1 Pet. i. 2, 5.*) And to shew how unseparably holiness and eternal happiness are connected in the decree, and in the execution of it, as also to prevent presumptuous confidences in elect-

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N O T E S.

* All conjectures about the sense in which *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* held that the resurrection is past already, are so exceeding uncertain, without any sufficient foundation to support them, that I cannot pretend to say particularly what it was; only it seems evident in the nature of things, that they rested on some figurative, political, or spiritual and mystical meaning, which they put upon the words, to supplant and evade the notion of a proper resurrection of the body.

† Many are the interpretations that have been given of this foundation of God which stands sure; some making it to mean a *work of grace*, or principle of holiness in the heart; others, *faith*; others, *Christ*; others, the *promises of the gospel*; others, the *doctrine of the resurrection*; and others, the *doctrine of election*; and they are all included in the paraphrase, while it principally points to the last of them.

ing love, without any experience of its proper fruits and effects, which are the only proofs and satisfying evidences of it to ourselves, the seal bears this further inscription, Let every one who makes a profession of Christ's name, and of trusting in him for salvation, think himself indispensibly bound, and accordingly make it his great care and concern, to depart in heart and life, and keep at the farthest distance, from every kind, degree, and instance of sin.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood, and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

20 But in the visible church there are professors and ministers of higher and lower rank; and some of them are excellent, honourable, and approved of God, as those whom he knows to be his; (*ver. 19.*) and others are mean and contemptible, a dishonour to, and disapproved of him, like those that err from the truth; (*ver. 18.*) even as in the great house of a prince or nobleman, there are not only magnificent vessels, such as are made of gold or silver for various and excellent offices; but there are also other vessels, formed out of meaner materials, such as wood or clay, for inferior purposes; and some of them are of so great worth and service, as to be in high esteem, and reflect an honour upon their Lord and Master; and others are so despicable and insignificant, as to be of little or no account, and unworthy to be deemed a part of the furniture of such a great personage's house.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

21 If therefore any one, who claims a share in the blessings, privileges, and services of the great Lord of the church, keep himself clear of the corrupt teachers, errors, and ungodly practices, but now specified; (*ver. 16, 17, 18.*) he shall be esteemed and found to be, whether minister or private Christian, an excellent vessel of mercy, (*Rom. ix. 24.*) designed and formed for the noblest purposes; purified and consecrated to the service of God, by the Holy Ghost; and commodiously fitted, apt and ready for acceptable employments in his Lord and Master's house; and thoroughly furnished (*chap. iii. 17.*) for the performance of every work and duty, that is good in itself, or by divine institution; good as to the matter, manner, and end of it, according to the good rule of the word, to the glory of God, and the good of his own and others souls.

22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

22 And as ever you, my son *Timothy*, would approve yourself to God and your own conscience, in the discharge of your trust, labour diligently, by his grace, to fly with the utmost speed and abhorrence from all irregular inclinations, passions, and appetites; such as ambition, pride, self-conceit, unadvised rashness, and sensuality of various kinds, which young men are prone to: Give no way to these; but let

let it be your special care to pursue in your preaching and practice as an example to others, (1 Tim. iv. 12.) the great things, that relate to righteousness, in its full extent; to fidelity and faith in Christ, and in God through him; to a charitable and peaceable temper and behaviour towards all those, of what denomination soever, that invoke, worship, and adore the Lord Jesus, and God the Father through him, in the sincerity of their hearts, as purified by faith, and purged from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ.

23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

23 But, as I have already advised you, (ver. 16.) Lay aside all inquiries and debates about impertinent fruitless points of controversy, that have nothing of true and solid wisdom in them; Do not intermeddle with these, as being assured that they tend only to beget quarrellsome and angry contentions, to the disturbance of the peace, of the church, and hindrance of the success of the gospel.

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

24 But it is no way becoming any servant of the Lord Jesus, were he only a private Christian, much less if he be a minister of the gospel of peace, to engage in any disputes with a quarrellsome and litigious spirit; since the *wrath of man works not the righteousness of God*: (James i. 20.) But, on the contrary, he ought to be kind and courteous in his behaviour toward persons of all characters; should go into the most inoffensive and least provoking manner of conveying the truth to them in love, and with clear scriptural evidence; and he should keep his temper with all patience and long-suffering, in bearing not only the infirmities of the weak, but even the prejudices and untractableness of those, that do not immediately embrace the doctrines of the gospel;

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

25 Endeavouring to win upon them that set themselves against the truth, by lenity, calmness, and sweetness of temper, as well as by strength of argument; and so gently instilling knowledge, as a father would into the tender minds of his children; in hope that, possibly, in due season, God may convince them of their error, and bring them to a sense of the evil and danger of persisting in it, and at length to relinquish it, and embrace, own, and boldly profess the truth as it is in Jesus;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

26 And that in this way, and by these means, (*αυτωνσωσι*) they may awake out of the ensnaring errors by which they were lulled asleep, and intoxicated like drunken men, and in which the devil had caught and held them, who, like captives of war, taken alive, (*εξωγερμενοι*) are in his hands to be enslaved, domineered over, and ruined by him, according to

to his malicious will and pleasure, *who walks about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* (1 Pet. v. 8.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What need have we of a continual recourse to, and supply from, the fountain of all grace, which is in Christ for the performance of every duty! And how great is our encouragement to depend upon him, and to own and honour him! For, according to the gospel-account of him, he is raised from the dead; and, whatever becomes of apostates, the ground of security to God's elect stands firm in his eternal purpose, whose distinguishing love knows and owns them, and has laid upon them the most powerful and endearing obligations to depart from all iniquity. They that bravely suffer, even unto death, for Christ in this world, shall live and reign with him for ever in the next; but they, that are ashamed of him and his gospel, shall be rejected by him: Whatsoever we think of it now, he will proceed, in the judgment of the great day, according to his promises and threatnings, and can as soon cease to be, as falsify his word. These things are worthy to be remembered and inculcated upon others, just as we have received them from the great apostle; and they ought to be committed as a sacred trust, to able and faithful ministers, among many witnesses, that they may preach them to the people. And O with what alacrity should they endure all hardships in fulfilling their office, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and as wrestlers and labourers in his service; and not embarrass themselves with secular affairs! They ought not to be discouraged at tribulations and bonds, or death itself, if they be called to suffer them in the cause of Christ, and for the sake of the elect, that they may be eternally saved together with themselves. How ambitious should they be of behaving to the approbation of their great Lord and Master, as vessels of honour, sanctified and fitted for his use, and for every good work, and as judicious and faithful preachers, that need not be ashamed, for want of skill or fidelity in making just and proper distributions of the word of truth! And how carefully should they avoid, and set themselves against, all errors, especially such as lead to fruitless contentions and ungodliness, and are subversive of fundamental articles of faith; and, unless put a stop to, will spread with as mischievous influence as a gangrene, like that of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* about the resurrection! The best way of confuting dangerous errors, and recommending gospel-truths, is to abstain from all vices of body and mind, and particularly from those that young men are most apt to indulge; and to live in the practice of righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with all upright Christians; to be courteous towards all men; and to overcome opposers by a sweetness of temper, patience, and forbearance, joined with clear and scriptural reasonings, to inform and persuade them; in hope that God, by these means, may convince them of their sin and folly, and bring them over to believe and profess the good doctrines they before had opposed; and so, by his grace, may awake out of their dead sleep, and escape out of the devil's snare, as those that are delivered from his will and power, and are turned to God. The Lord help us to reflect seriously on these, and all his faithful sayings; and give us wisdom and grace to make a right improvement of them to his glory, and our own and others good!

C H A P. III.

The apostle foretels the rise of dangerous enemies to the truth and holiness of the gospel, 1,—9. Proposes his own example for Timothy's imitation, in opposition to them, 10,—13. And exhorts him to persist in the doctrines he had learned from him, and from the holy scriptures, which are of divine inspiration, and every way sufficient for the noblest purposes, 14,—17.

TEXT.

THIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

PARAPHRASE.

I WOULD further remind you, as I did in my former epistle, (*chap. iv. 1.*) that under the gospel-dispensation, which is the last and best that ever will be set up in this world, days of exceeding great difficulty and danger (*χαλεποι*) will trouble the church, not only on account of persecutions; but chiefly by reason of sad corruptions in doctrines and manners, as they already begin to appear, and will gradually work till they issue in a much greater apostacy still, toward the latter part of this last dispensation*.

2 For, to give you some signs of the days I mean, by which they may be known, A set of wicked carnally-minded men will arise under the Christian name, that will be of a notoriously selfish spirit, aiming merely at their own secular interest, honour, and ease, without any regard to the good of others; insatiable in their thirst and pursuits after the riches of this world; vain-glorious boasters of their own endowments and advantages; lofty and arrogant in their temper and behaviour; defamers of Christ's offices and people, doctrines and ways; undutiful to their fathers and mothers, rejecting their authority; basely ungrateful to them, and other benefactors, and have all, to God for the good things they receive from him, by their means; un sanctified, impious, and profane;

3 Destitute

N O T E.

* The corruptions specified in the following verses are very remarkably exemplified in the *Romish* church; in their selfish secular views, pride and blasphemies; in their children's being unnaturally put into monasteries and nunneries, sometimes without, and at others with the consent of their parents; in unthankfulness to God, and to the princes that raised the popes to their dignity and authority; in their breaking faith with, and false accusations of them, that they call heresies; in their cruel persecutions, and contemptuous treatment of

good men and things; in their treachery and deceit, and traitorous actings against sovereign princes; in their insolent and haughty behaviour, and indulging unto luxury and unlawful pleasures, and insinuating themselves into, corrupting and sifting out the secrets of families by auricular confessions; in their perverting the faith, and pretending to miracles; and all this under specious forms of piety, and external shows of devotion, instead of true love to God and godliness, &c. (See also the notes on 1 *Tim. iv. 1.* and 2 *Thess. ii. 3, 4.*)

3 Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, deadly, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come

3 Destitute of all that tenderness and natural affection, (*ασεργος*) which is due to mankind in general, to near relations more particularly, and from parents to children most of all, which is found even among the brutes themselves toward their young; perfidious violators of the most solemn engagements, promises and contracts; false accusers (*δικοβολοι*) of other men, like devils incarnate, that delight in unjust calumnies; intemperate, (*ακρατους*) under the power of ungovernable appetites, lusts, and passions; furious and cruel in their tempers and treatment of others; without any true love (*αφιλαγαθοι*) to the righteous, that are more excellent than themselves, or to things that are good.

4 Betrayers of civil and sacred trusts, and delivering up even their nearest a-kin to miseries and death, for Christ's name's sake; (*Mat. x. 21, 22.*) headstrong, rash, daring and precipitant (*αροπνους*) in their words and behaviour; puffed up with the pride and vanity of their own minds; entirely addicted to, and fond of sensual pleasures, more than, and instead of being well affected towards God, and the things that are pleasing in his sight.

5 What further aggravates their monstrous wickedness is, that they cloke and disguise it with a fair show of sanctity under a profession of Christian religion, and of a reverence of God, and with external forms of piety and devotion; but at the same time are utter strangers, and enemies to, and practical renouncers of the life and power of true godliness to govern their hearts and lives. Now I would advise you to have nothing to do with such false pretenders to the Christian name; but to reject them with abhorrence, and keep at the remotest distance from them, and from all fellowship and communion with them: Beware of them, as of wolves in sheep's clothing. (*Mat. vii. 15.*)

6 For this sort of people are very sly in their insinuations: They, with a show of innocence and extraordinary holiness, (*Mat. xxiii. 14.*) secretly wind themselves, like snakes, into such families as they can get an interest in, or hopes of any advantage by, that they may intrude into their secrets, and exercise an absolute tyranny over their estates and consciences; and they surprisingly wheedle and ensnare the hearts and affections of weak and ignorant people, who, like thoughtless giddy women, under the power of sinful passions, are easily imposed upon, and misled by every plausible pretence, that soothes and flatters their own corrupt inclinations.

7 And so they are always running after every new teacher, and hearkning to, and imbibing every new doctrine;

come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as *Jannes* and *Jambres* *, withstood *Moses*, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

doctrine; and are so disconcerted, unsettled, and confounded by this means, as never to be able to attain to a clear, judicious, and saving knowledge of the true gospel of Christ.

8 Now as in former days *Jannes* and *Jambres* *, two famous magicians of *Egypt*, pretended to vie with *Moses* in working miracles, and set themselves up against him, who came with a divine commission to deliver the *Israelites* out of the house of bondage; so these false teachers set up themselves, and their errors, with pretences to miracles, in opposition to the plain truth of the gospel, and written word of God, and to the faithful servants of Christ, whom he has sent to preach deliverance to captives: And these deceivers, like those magicians, are men of depraved and vitiated minds, void of judgment, and utterly disapproved, (*αδοκίμοι*) and disowned of God, (see the note 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5.) as to every thing that relates to the pure doctrines of faith, according to the gospel-revelation of them.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

9 But it is a sweet support and comfort in the most perilous times, (*ver.* 1.) to be assured, as we may and ought to be, that these men, though permitted to proceed very far in their pretended miracles and delusions, are under a divine restraint, and shall certainly in God's time be put a stop to, and make no further progress; but shall be entirely confuted and overthrown to their own confusion: For (*αἰσχος*) the folly and madness of their sinful opinions, and methods of management, shall at length be discovered with the plainest evidence to the whole world; even as the *Egyptian* magicians, after they had made a fair show of performing several miracles, were at length defeated, and exposed to open shame, and grievously tormented, in the contest, which *Moses*, the servant of the Lord, had with them. (*Exod.* vii. 12. and viii. 18, 19. and ix. 11.)

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

10 But, to guard you against all such seducers and their corrupt principles and practices of every kind, I would remind you of, and recommend to your imitation, what you have seen and experienced of a contrary strain in my behaviour. You who have so much attended, and been so intimately acquainted with me, have

N O T E.

* The names of *Jannes* and *Jambres* are not mentioned in any part of the Old Testament; but are found, with a little variation of spelling, in several ancient Jewish writers, and are spoken of as the princes or chiefs of the magicians; accounts of which are collected at large by

Dr. Hammond in his notes on this place, and in the works of the learned Mr. John Gregory: (Part I. Chap. 15.) And so the apostle, as may be supposed, takes these instances from Jewish writings, and argues from their own authors, that were currently received by that people.

have sought after, and cannot but have attained to a thorough knowledge of the excellent doctrine according to godliness, that I have always taught; the course of my self-denying, holy, and religious conversation, agreeable to it; the sincerity and steadiness of my aims and pursuits for promoting the glory of God and the good of souls; my fidelity in preaching the pure gospel of Christ under the power of that faith, which I myself have in him, and endeavour to propagate to others; the forbearance and lenity I have all along shown toward the weak, the ignorant, and unteachable; the love I have shewn to God and Christ, and the souls and bodies of men, whether friends or enemies, and especially to all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth; and the patience that I have exercised toward my most violent opposers, and under their most furious outrage against me.

11 Persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

11 You have likewise fully known what severe persecutions, and extreme sufferings, to the utmost hazard of my life, I have undergone, with holy fortitude and composure, in various places for the gospel's sake, as particularly at *Antioch in Pisidia*, (Acts xiii. 14, 45, 50.) at *Iconium*, and at *Lystra*, two cities of *Lycæonia*, in the Lesser *Asia*, (Acts xiv. 2, 5, 6, 19. *) but, as you also well know, the Lord Jesus, whom I serve, and for whose cause I suffer, stood by me, supported and preserved me, and delivered me out of all those tribulations, in the last of which, namely at *Lystra*, he in a miraculous manner restored my life, after I was supposed to have been dead. (Acts xiv. 20.) In reflection therefore on those wonderful appearances of the Lord for me in all my troubles, you need not be afraid of sufferings for Christ; but ought to be encouraged to trust in him for all seasonable assistances and consolations, if you are called to endure the like.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

12 And indeed such is the wickedness and violence of the present and approaching days, and such the general corruption of human nature in all ages, that whosoever are desirous and determined, and accordingly make it their practice, to live after a truly religious manner, in a holy profession of Christ's name, by virtue derived from him, after his example, and according to the

N O T E.

* As *Timothy* was an inhabitant of *Lystra*, where *Paul* met with him, Acts xvi. 1. it is very probable that he was an eye-witness of the people's stoning the apostle there, till they thought he had been dead, and of his wonderfully reviving afterwards; or, at least, he could

not be ignorant of those notorious facts in his own town; and the apostle here appeals to him about his troubles, not only at *Lystra*, but also at *Antioch* and *Iconium*, as to one that had fully known them upon the surest testimony, if not by ocular demonstration.

the rules of his word, they will be exposed to sufferings for his sake; and such is the appointment of God for making the members of Christ conformable to their head, who went through sufferings to glory, that all persons of this character must expect to meet with, ought to prepare for, and will certainly more or less, in one form or other, undergo persecutions from the hands or tongues of the seed of the old serpent, that is ever full of enmity against the church.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

13 But men of wicked minds, under a form of godliness, and seducing impostors, are so far from submitting to sufferings for righteousness sake, that they will stick at nothing to avoid them, or to bring them upon others that do not fall in with their measures: They will be continually going further and further into violence and wickedness, and all that is bad in principle and practice, doing what in them lies to draw others into erroneous and sinful paths; and being themselves wanderers from the truth, and the greatest deceivers of their own souls, as will most fully appear in the general apostacy of the last days under anti-Christian powers.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

14 But as for you, my dear son *Timothy*, whatever others do, See that you abide perseveringly, steadfastly, and immoveably in the belief, profession, and preaching of the pure, uncorrupted and important doctrines of the gospel, which you have embraced, and been fully convinced of, upon the strongest and most satisfying evidence, as knowing by all the signs of apostleship, which have appeared in me, that I, of whom you have learned them, (*chap. i. 13. and ii. 2.*) am no less than an immediately commissioned servant of Jesus Christ, who have taught them by his express command, and by special revelation from him; and consequently, that you have learned them, by means of my ministry, from Christ himself, who is the *Amen, the faithful and true Witness*, and cannot possibly deceive you.

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

15 You also know, and are very well assured, that they are entirely consonant to the divine oracles of the Old Testament, which may well be called, by way of eminence and distinction from all human writings, *the Holy Scriptures*, as they were indited by the Holy Spirit, and delivered by holy men about holy things; (*2 Peter i. 21.*) and as they contain all the principles of holiness, with all directions, obligations, and motives to it, and are adapted, and blessed of God, to make men holy here, in order to a state of complete holiness and happiness hereafter. In the knowledge of those sacred oracles, you have been educated from your very childhood up, by the dili-

gent care of your pious mother and grandmother, (*chap. i. 5.*) who, as excellent examples to all Christian parents, brought you betimes to read and treasure them up in your memory, and to consider the meaning of them * ; which, together with the gospel-revelation, as contained in the New Testament-writings now extant, are such a comprehensive system of divine things, as is every way sufficient, in the nature of means, and will be effectual, through the attending light and influence of the blessed Spirit, to make you emphatically wise ; wise toward God and for your own soul ; wise unto an understanding of the way, and taking the course, which the wisdom and grace of God have appointed in his word, for obtaining eternal life, not by the works of the law, but through that faith, which has Jesus Christ for its object, and is led to trust in him alone for all salvation.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

16 All the sacred writings, both of the Old and New Testament, are of divine original, as God, by his Spirit, directed and inspired the holy penmen to deliver them exactly according to truth ; and they are all of great and excellent use and advantage, some in one way, and others in another ; either for revealing important doctrines concerning God and ourselves, our duty to him and one another, our state by nature and by grace, and the whole scheme of salvation through a Redeemer ; or for reproving and convincing of sin and error, and of sinners and backsliders from the truth and holiness of the gospel ; or for rectifying and reforming what is amiss ; or for direction in a way of faith and obedience, unto the obtaining of

NOTE.

* *The holy scriptures*, which Timothy knew from a child, in all likelihood through the care and pains of his good mother and grandmother, must relate to the *Old Testament-scriptures* ; because none of the New Testament-writings were then extant : And yet these were sufficient to make him wise to salvation, through faith in the Messiah that was to come, 'till he was revealed ; and when the New Testament was added to the Old, which Timothy by this time was acquainted with, they were sufficient to make him wise to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, as the true Messiah, who had actually appeared, and fulfilled all the parts of his office on earth, that pertained to him as such : And if, during the state of the Old Testament-church, their scriptures were sufficient to make them wise to salvation, through faith in the *promised* Saviour ; much more

through faith in the *actually exhibited* Saviour, must *all* the inspired writings, taken together under the gospel state, be so ; most of the New Testament-writings having been extant before this epistle was sent to Timothy. Though therefore gospel light undoubtedly far exceeds all that ever went before it ; and though it cannot be said, that *every part* of scripture is *absolutely necessary* to be known in order to salvation ; yet they are all profitable in their places, as infallible and inspired writings for excellent and important purposes : *ver. 16.* (See my *Standing-Use of the Scriptures.*) And now the *whole canon of scripture* is completed, under divine inspiration of the New, as well as of the Old Testament, there can be no need of the addition of any doctrines, or precepts, to direct our faith, or practice, that are not contained in them.

of righteousness both for justification and sanctification, that we may be accounted righteous in Christ, and derive all renewing and purifying grace and assistance from him, for the performing of every duty, and making us holy in heart and life.

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

17 And these scriptures, taken altogether as exhibiting Old Testament-types and figures, prophecies and promises, and New Testament light and accomplishments, and the plainest discoveries of Christ in his person and offices, and as prescribing duties of every kind, are a perfect rule of faith and practice; and contain all that can be necessary, not only to make a complete Christian, who, according to divine appointment, devotes himself, as such, to the service of God; but also a complete minister of Christ, whom God has set apart for himself to declare his mind and will to others; and so they are suited, in the nature of means, thoroughly to instruct, fit, and furnish one, as well as the other, for a due understanding and performance of every good work, that he is called to, relating to God, himself, and others.

RECOLLECTIONS.

We need not wonder if our lot be cast in perilous times, either through the violence of persecutions, or through corruptions in doctrine and manners; since the word of God has foretold them. And, alas! How many selfish, worldly-minded, vain-glorious, proud, ungrateful, and impious professors are there in our day, especially in the apostate church of *Rome*! How many have thrown off natural affection, and all obligations to filial and parental duty; and have given themselves up to falsehood, treachery, slander, rashness, insolence, and every furious and inordinate passion, and sensual pleasure, in preference to God himself! And how grievous is it, that any should indulge to all this under the mask of an external profession of godliness, while they are averse to its power in their hearts and lives; and that men of such corrupt minds should artfully insinuate themselves into, and captivate weak and ignorant people, who are governed and misled by sinful appetites, and are perpetually following new teachers and new things, and are so disconcerted thereby, as never to attain to a right knowledge of the truth of the gospel! The seducers of such are wicked men, and disapproved of God, as utterly destitute of true faith, whatever their pretences be; and therefore it behoves all ministers and Christians to have nothing to do with them in matters of religion. Blessed be God, that all their opposition to the gospel is under his controul; and that, though they may be permitted to run great lengths, they at last, like the *Egyptian*-magicians, shall be confuted, put a stop to, and exposed to open shame. But O what an engaging plan, of a contrary strain, have we in the great apostle's doctrine, manner of life, steady views to the honour of Christ and the good of souls; and in his faith and faithfulness, lenity, love, and patience! Though he suffered the greatest persecutions; yet the Lord was with him in them, and amazingly delivered him out of them. What an encouragement is this to believers, and faithful servants of Christ, under any tribulation, which they may expect and meet with for his sake! While others therefore wax worse and worse, under the power of sin and error, how concerned should we be to continue steadfast in the faith, profession, and practice of those things, that we have learned from the apostle's, and other sacred writings of the Old and New Testament! They are all inspired of God: Parents should early teach them to their children; and they are sufficient to make us wise to salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus, and to answer all the purposes of truth and holiness, of refutation of error, and reformation of manners, and of instruction in the way of righteousness, to the glory of God, and the salvation of our own souls; and they are such a perfect rule of all that is to be believed and done,

done, that ministers and people may find the whole compass of their duty in them, and be thoroughly fitted, by their means, for performing it, through divine light and grace, in every instance here, till all be completed in a better world.

C H A P. IV.

The apostle most solemnly charges Timothy to be diligent in his ministerial work, though many will not endure sound doctrine, 1,—5. Enforces the charge from a consideration of his own approaching martyrdom, which would have a glorious issue, 6,—8. Desires him to come speedily to him, and bring Mark and certain mentioned things along with him, 9,—13. Cautions him against Alexander the copper-smith, and complains of such as had deserted him; but prays for them, and expresses his faith, as to his own preservation to the heavenly kingdom, 14,—18. and concludes with salutations and his usual benediction, 19,—22.

TEXT.

I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom;

PARAPHRASE.

SINCE you are and will be surrounded with many adversaries, and are so richly furnished for maintaining the truth against them; and since all scripture, which you are so well acquainted with, is of divine original, and of such extensive use and advantage, as has been but now observed, (*chap. iii. 13,—17.*) I solemnly lay the following injunction upon your conscience, with regard to your faithfully discharging the work of an Evangelist, as in the sight and presence of the all-seeing God, and the heart-searching Saviour, (*Rev. ii. 23.*) and as you will answer it at the bar of the Lord Christ, and before him, when he shall come to judge all mankind, even all that shall be alive, or dead and raised again, at his glorious appearance, in the great day of account, and at his finishing the whole design of his mediatorial kingdom; and being revealed in all the glory of his heavenly kingdom, in which he, as God, together with the Father and Spirit, will reign, as in his essential kingdom, and in which he, as the Head and King of the church, will reign with a visible pre-eminence, and they shall reign in and with him, in all possible dignity, grandeur, and delight for ever and ever. (See the note on *1 Cor. xv. 24.*)

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with

2 What I this awfully charge upon you, as with a religious oath, is this, Proclaim aloud, (*μενεγο*) and with all authority and boldness, like one of Christ's heralds, the inspired word of God, as it is profitable for doctrine*; preach it with earnestness and

NOTE.

* Here seems to me to be a reference to the several uses of the word, or scripture,

with all long-suffering and doctrine.

and diligence on the Lord's days, and on other days, in times of peace and of persecution, in public and private, on stated and proper occasional opportunities, when it is more or less likely to do good, as one that sows his seed in the morning, and in the evening, not knowing which shall prosper: (*Eccles. xi. 6.*) Apply the word, as there may be occasion, for reproof, to convince gainfayers of their errors; for reprehending sinners and backsliders, to reclaim and reform them; and for counselling, exhorting, and encouraging believers, to go on in the way of righteousness: Insist on these various parts and uses of the word, with all meekness, patience, constancy, and perseverance; and in a free, open, and faithful declaration of the whole counsel of God, without adding to it, or taking from it, or altering and corrupting it, whatever difficulties, trials, and opposition you may meet with on that account.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

3 For as already there begins to be; so in a little while, and yet more in process of time, there will be perilous days, when men of corrupt minds, as I have before warned you, (*chap. iii. 1, — 8, 13.*) will be so nettled at the wholesome, pure, unmixed doctrine of the gospel, that they will not bear to hear it; but, being enraged against it, through their own pride, lusts, passions, and prejudices, will seek out, and multiply to themselves such false teachers, as shall tickle their ears with new notions, and unscriptural discourses, that please their fancies, and are agreeable to their own vitiated taste.

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

4 And through the love of novelty, that will gratify their curiosity and corrupt inclinations, they will turn a deaf ear to the truths of the gospel, and will eagerly listen after, and fondly embrace, every vain, empty, trifling, and senseless story, like *Jewish* fables and traditions, (*1 Tim. i. 4.*) to divert and amuse themselves, and keep their own consciences easy.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

5 But as for you, my dear son *Timothy*, be upon your guard against all such sort of people and their errors; and watch for all opportunities of confuting them, and establishing the truth in opposition to them: Watch against all temptations; watch over your own spirit and conduct at all times, and in all circumstances; and watch for the souls of those that are committed to your care: (*Heb. xiii. 17.*) Submit with meekness to, and sustain with fortitude and patience,

N O T E.

ture, which had been specified, *chap. iii. 16.* and therefore several passages in this verse are paraphrased in correspondence to that.

patience, whatever tribulations your adversaries may bring upon you: Notwithstanding all their attempts to dishearten and silence you, go on in the name and strength of the Lord with your work, as an Evangelist; and thoroughly perform all the parts of your ministry with fidelity, care, and diligence, to the conviction of gainstayers, and approving yourself to the consciences of true believers. I give this as my final charge, that you may attend to it after I am dead and gone, and can no longer advise you, or help forward the work of the Lord with you.

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

6 For, to allude to the *Jewish* libations, or pouring out of the wine upon their sacrifices, (see the paraphrase on *Phil.* ii. 17.) I am just on the point of pouring out my blood as a martyr for Christ, and (*ἡδη σπινδομαι*) am already willing to be offered up as a sacrifice, not of atonement, which Christ has perfectly made by the one offering of himself; but of acknowledgment, to the glory of God, and the confirmation of the gospel which I am going to seal with my blood*; and I am fully assured, that the time of my dissolution, (*αυαλυσως*) when my soul will depart from the body, and from earth to heaven, to be ever with the Lord, and when my body shall be dissolved into its original dust, is so near and certain, that it may be considered as if it were actually come to pass.

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

7 In this situation I can look backwards and forward with the greatest pleasure: In a review of what the grace of God has done for me, and by me, I have the comfortable witness of his Spirit, and of my own conscience, that I have been enabled, in a good degree, to war the best of warfares, in the best cause, even in the cause of Christ against all his, my own, and the church's spiritual enemies; and to behave like a good combatant against them, and like a good soldier of Jesus Christ, with courage, fidelity, and success in fighting his battles, under his banner, as the Captain of salvation: † I have held on my way through all the trials, labours, and difficulties that I have been called to, as a minister and a Christian; have

N O T E S.

* The apostle speaks with confidence of his *departure as at hand*, and might be fully satisfied, either by immediate revelation, or by what he had observed of Nero's temper and behaviour in his first apology, *ver.* 16. or had heard since, that he would be condemned to death, when he should be called forth to take his second trial.

† The terms used in this and the next

passage are *agonistical*, in allusion to the combats and race in the *Grecian* games: But as the life of ministers and Christians is often compared to a *warfare*, and the apostle had directed *Timothy* to *endure hardness* as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, *chap.* ii. 3. I have considered the first clause of this verse in that allusion also.

have run with patience the race that was set before me; and have now in a manner completed my course of life and obedience, sufferings and services; and am got just to the goal: And from the beginning to the end of this combat and race, I have maintained the purity of the doctrines of what may be emphatically called *the faith*, (see *Jude*, ver. 3.) have lived by faith upon them, and been faithful in professing, publishing, and defending them; and living answerable to them, for the glory of God, and the good of my own and other souls. (*ver.* 8.)

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

8 And the rich experience I have had of the grace of God, which has been with me, to assist, animate and succeed my labours, all along, to the very close of life, (*1 Cor.* xv. 10.) raises my joyful hope and confidence, in *looking forward*, that what now remains is to receive the prize of the high calling of God, (*Phil.* iii. 14.) which is laid up in Christ, and reserved in heaven for me; even a glorious *crown of life that fadeth not away*, (*James* i. 12. and *1 Peter* i. 4. and v. 4.) and is infinitely superior, in worth and dignity, to all the withering garlands and crowns of earthly conquerors; and may be called a crown of *righteousness*, as it is given, on account of the Redeemer's merit, only to righteous persons, and consists in the perfection of all righteousness and true holiness, which I shall be made partaker of by the free gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, the impartial Judge of all, who proceeds upon principles of righteousness, in fidelity to his promises, and in making his rewards of grace, as well as of justice, according to the rule of his word, by sentencing impenitent sinners to everlasting punishment for their iniquities, and true believers to everlasting life for his own righteousness sake, at the great day of his coming to judge the quick and the dead: (*ver.* 1.) And he will give this glorious crown, not merely to me, as if no others were to be crowned besides me; but be assured, for the encouragement of your own soul, and of all his faithful followers and servants, that he will certainly do the same to every one, that realizes by faith, and with pleasure, and suitable preparation, waits, looks, longs, and hopes for his second illustrious appearing, *when he will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.* (*2 Thess.* i. 10.)

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.

9 In the mean while, lest it be soon too late, make all possible haste in coming to me, who greatly wapt to impart some further instructions to you, and should be much comforted to see you, as being now in a manner alone.

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

10 For Demas, who has been a fellow-labourer, and might have been of service to me in my present difficult circumstances, has shamefully deserted me; he being afraid to run any risk in owning and standing by me, through too great a love of the ease, honour, safety, and accommodations of this present insinuating world; and he of his own head, under the power of temptation, has retired to *Thessalonica*, the metropolis of *Macedonia*, where he hopes to get out of the danger he would be exposed to here*; *Crescens* is gone, with my approbation, on important affairs, to *Galatia*, as *Titus* also is to *Dalmatia*.

11 *Luke*, the beloved physician, (*Col. iv. 14.*) is the only fellow-labourer that remains, and chooses to be with me, and assistant to me: And as I should be glad to have the company of some other faithful brethren, I desire that when you come, according to my expectation and hope, you would bring *Mark* along with you; (see the note on *Col. iv. 10.*) for he may be of great service to me, in going on messages, and subserving my ministerial work, the little time I may have to live.

12 I greatly need his, as well as your assistance†; for I have lately dispatched *Tychicus*, on urgent occasions, to my friends at *Ephesus*; and I dearly miss his company, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister in the Lord, (*Eph. vi. 21.*) and whom I have often sent on errands to various persons and churches, when I could not be with them myself. (*Acts xx. 4, 5. Col. iv. 7. and Tit. iii. 12.*)

13 The

NOTES.

* The apostle calls *Demas* his fellow-labourer, (*Philem. ver. 24.*) and speaks of his joining in a salutation with *Luke* the beloved physician: (*Col. iv. 14.*) He therefore appears to have been a minister of some esteem formerly with the apostle, but a man of so timorous and worldly a spirit, as to forsake him in his difficult circumstances, under an apprehension of danger to himself, as the disciples did our Lord in the time of his extremity: However, we cannot certainly conclude concerning him, any more than concerning them, that he turned utter apostate, though he, as well as they, acted a most unbecoming, unworthy, and criminal part, under the power of temptation, and of too strong an attachment to this life and its concerns; accordingly the apostle sets a black mark upon him, in distinction from *Crescens* and *Titus*, of whom he only says, they were gone, one to *Galatia*, a province of the

Lesser Asia, and the other to *Dalmatia*, a country in the southern part of *Illyricum*; (see the note on *Rom. xv. 1.*) to which places he probably had sent them on some messages, or other business of considerable consequence. Who *Crescens* was is quite uncertain, we having no other account of him: But as he is here mentioned just in the same manner with *Titus*, it is probable he was a minister, and stood well in the apostle's esteem.

† The particle (*et*) here rendered *and*, is sometimes casual, and translated *for*, as in *Luke xii. 48. Acts vii. 25. 1 Thes. ii. 16. and 1 Tim. iii. 5.*; and thus I think it may be taken in this place, as assigning a further reason of *Paul's* desiring *Mark*, as well as *Timothy* to come to him; or, perhaps, he sent *Tychicus* to *Ephesus* to supply *Timothy's* place, when he should come to *Rome*.

13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the copper-smith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works.

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

13 The cloke which I left, when I was last at Troas, with our friend Carpus, might be of good use to me here *; therefore I beg you would take care to bring it with you, when you come to me, as also the several books which I left there; but, above all, fail not to bring the important parchments, that are also in his custody.

14 Alexander the infamous copper-smith, has been my bitter enemy; a most malicious instrument, who has falsely accused, and been very injurious to me. (See the notes on Acts xix. 33. and 1 Tim. i. 20.) I leave him, as an utter and irreclaimable apostate, to the righteous judgment of God †, who will call him to a severe account, and recompense tribulation to him, according to the just desert of his evil deeds, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven to take vengeance on all his enemies and impenitent unbelievers. (2 Theff. i. 6,—9.)

15 I would therefore warn you to have a watchful eye, as I have had, upon that man. Avoid him as an excommunicated person; (1 Tim. i. 20.) and take heed lest he serve you and others of the servants and people of God, as basely as he has me: For he has virulently set himself against, and stiffly opposed the gospel of salvation, which I and you preach to

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all

NOTES.

* I have taken the word (*περιων*) in the sense of our translators, to mean a cloke, which might be, either the *pallium*, that belonged to the apostle, as a Roman citizen; or an upper garment, which he usually wore at inclement seasons, and would need in a cold prison, as the winter was coming on: Others take this word to signify a roll, and others a bag, book-case, box, or chest, or some repository in which Paul's books and parchments were kept. And as the ancients had two sorts of books, one in the form of leaves and pages of parchment, or of paper made of the Egyptian Papyrus; and the other of like materials, rolled up when laid aside, and unrolled when opened for use. The books here mentioned seem to have been the first, and parchments the second of these sorts of books, which, because rolled up, were called *volumes*. What was contained in them is both a curious and fruitless inquiry, that neither needs, nor can be satisfied: But as the apostle laid so particular an emphasis on the parchments, some have conjectured, that they might be the volumes of the Old Testament; others, the copy of his freedom as a Roman, which might have been of use

to him in his trial; others, the originals of the epistles, that he had sent to, or received from several churches, which he would leave in Timothy's custody. The apostle therefore ordered him to bring these things, that then lay in the hands of Carpus at Troas. As this is the only place, where Carpus is mentioned, we know little of his character; but he seems to have been the apostle's host at Troas, and a faithful brother, in whom he placed so much confidence, as to leave things, for which he had so great a value, under his care.

† The apostle probably knew by immediate revelation, that Alexander was a malicious, obstinate, and incorrigible enemy to Christianity, whom God had given up to hardness of heart; and therefore if he imprecated a due reward of his iniquity upon him, that is no rule for us to do the like on persons, of whom we cannot have the same assurance: But some good copies read the Lord (*αποδοσει*) will reward him according to his works; (Vid. Mill. in loc.) and so it is to be considered, not as an imprecation, much less as what the apostle desired; but a prediction of what would certainly befall him.

all sorts of sinners, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, through faith in Christ Jesus.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

16 When I was brought upon my first trial, and then made my apology, (*απολογία*) in defence of Christ's and my own cause before the Emperor, none of my Christian acquaintance, that were capable of being any way serviceable to me, had courage enough to own and countenance me, or to appear as witnesses on my behalf; but they all, through infirmity, cowardice, or fear of suffering, forsook me, as the disciples of our Lord did him, when he was apprehended in order to his being tried, condemned, and crucified. (*Matth. xxvi. 56.*) I heartily wish, and earnestly pray, that, as he graciously forgave them, and brought them to repentance, he would forgive and recover these my brethren, and not impute this iniquity to them, or deal with them according to its deserts. (See the note on *ver. 10.*)

17 Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the *Gentiles* might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

17 However, while they through weakness and fear were permitted to desert me, the Lord Jesus himself, my almighty fast Friend, who is infinitely better than they all, owned and appeared for me, as his servant, and strengthened me with might by his Spirit in the inner man, to carry me above the fear of sufferings and death: And he was mouth and wisdom to me, to enable me to speak boldly for him in the face of his and my most powerful adversaries, that, by my apology at *Cesar's* bar, the tenor of my preaching the gospel might be thoroughly laid open to the whole court; and it might be thereby evident to all around me, that it has no ill tendency for disturbing the civil government; and that my having preached it with so great success was not by human aid, but by the power of God, as divinely assisting me, and giving the increase; (*1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.*) and particularly, that all the *Gentiles*, then present, might have an opportunity of hearing the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, as sent unto them: And I was, at that time, as wonderfully preserved from imminent danger, as if I had been snatched out of the mouth of a lion; (see *Psal. xxii. 21.*) and was delivered from the rage and cruelty of *Nero* and his agents, who, like a roaring lion, under the influence of their father the devil, sought to devour and destroy me. (*John viii. 44.* and *1 Pet. v. 8.*)

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory

18 And I am abundantly encouraged by his word, and the great experience I have had of his love and care thus far, to trust with an entire confidence in his power, faithfulness, and grace, that he will keep me from doing any thing unworthy the Christian, or the minister, to save my life, or to get rid of the hottest

glory for ever and
ever. Amen.

test persecutions and terrors of mine enemies * ; and that, whatever befalls me in my bonds, and in the issues of them, as to this world, he will do what is best for me, and will effectually secure me from apostacy, and from doing any iniquitous thing to his dishonour, and will enable me to persevere with faith and patience, and continue faithful to the death, till he shall receive me to live with him in the immortal dignity, grandeur, and delights of his heavenly kingdom : To whom I cheerfully ascribe all possible honour and glory for what he is in himself, and has been, and will be to me ; To him it justly belongs, and ought to be paid henceforth and for ever more, *Amen*. So let it be ; and so I am confident it will be.

19 Salute Priscilla, and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

19 To draw towards a conclusion, I, as an aged dying friend and apostle, send all religious salutations to the eminently godly and benevolent *Priscilla* and *Aquila*, who are an honour to the Christian character, in the conjugal relation of wife and husband. (See the notes on *Acts* xviii. 26. and *Rom.* xvi. 3.) I also send the same to the pious family of *Onesiphorus*, who I know is absent from home ; and therefore does not send in like manner to him. (See the note on *chap.* i. 16.)

20 Erastus abode at Corinth : but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

20 Nor do I to *Erastus*, the chamberlain of the city, (see the note on *Rom.* xvi. 33.) who I also know is not in your parts, but tarried at *Corinth* : Nor is *Trophimus* with you, whom I left sick at *Melitus* in *Crete*, when I came from thence ; and though I was heartily concerned for him, I had no suggestion, or power communicated to me, to work a miracle in healing him. (See the note on *Philp.* ii. 27.) Such is my affection to all these absent persons, that, were they near you, I should desire you to salute them also in my name.

21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

21 As no time is to be lost, and travelling will be incommodious at inclement seasons, I earnestly entreat you to try your utmost to get to me before the winter comes on. Our Christian friend and brother *Eubulus* sends his affectionate respects to you, as also do *Pudens* and *Linus* and *Claudia*, and indeed all our brethren in Christ, that are in these parts, and know of my writing to you.

22 My

N O T E.

* The apostle cannot be supposed here to mean, that the Lord would deliver him from sufferings unto death, because he had said, with an assurance of his dying a martyr, that the time of his departure was at hand : (ver. 6.) But he

was confident that the Lord would deliver him from doing any sinful, unbecoming thing, contrary to faith and a good conscience, to preserve his life, or escape sufferings for Christ.

22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

22 My own heart's desire for you is, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may be ever with your spirit, to guide, support, strengthen, comfort, and sanctify you. And my benediction to all the saints, together with you, is, May his free love or favour, and a sweet sense of it in all its precious fruits and effects, continually abound towards all and every one of you. (*vener*) In testimony of my desire and hope of this, I say, *Amen*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What need have ministers and others to be excited to their duty, in serious reflections on that awful day, when Christ will come in all the majesty and glory of his kingdom to judge the whole world, quick and dead, who must then give an account of themselves, and of all that they have done in the body to him? Great are the difficulties of fulfilling the ministerial charge, in which Christ's servants are called to watch, and endure hardships; to preach the pure word of God in the whole compass of it, on all proper occasion, for the great purposes of instruction, rebuke, comfort, and exhortation, with all long-suffering and patience; under the neglect of friends, and opposition of enemies. But, blessed be God, the encouragements of those, that desire to be faithful, are exceeding great. Though all men should forsake them, the Lord Jesus himself will stand by them; will assist and own them in their work; will appear for them in their tribulations; will keep them from choosing sin, rather than sufferings; will ordinarily give them delightful reflections, at the close of life, on the grace that has enabled them to fight the good fight of faith; and will preserve them to his heavenly kingdom, and crown them, as conquerors, at the end of their race and warfare, by an act of righteousness on his own account, and of faithfulness to his word, as well as of mercy to them, at the great day. But, alas! How many are there, who sit under the ministry of the gospel, that cannot bear, but are wayed by the pride, corruption, and vanity of their own minds, to renounce the truth and holiness of sound doctrine, and to follow every novelty and new preacher, that please the fancy, instead of prosecuting their souls! How many others are there, that one would hope to be good people, who, like *Demas* and other professors, are too much in love with life and the concerns of it, and so weak in faith, and so much under the power of temptation, as to be afraid and ashamed to appear openly for Christ, and for his most eminent servants, in times of danger! The good Lord pardon all such, and recover them to a better and more courageous Spirit! But as to those apparently malicious, obstinate, and incorrigible enemies to Christ, and to ourselves for his sake, there is little or no room to hope, but that he will reward them according to the due desert of their wicked works: In the mean while we ought to be upon our guard against them, lest we be injured by them in our religious principles, manners, and views. But O happy souls! that sincerely and affectionately love Christ, and rejoice in the thoughts of his one day appearing, like himself, in all his glory, and that testify their love to him in doing all they can to promote his cause. They, as well as his ministering servants, shall receive the crown of life in the day of Judgment. With what cordial affection then should they greet one another, as Christian-brethren! And how earnestly wish and pray, that the Lord may be with their Spirits; and that his grace, which is sufficient for them, may be manifested to and in them, and perform all things for them! In like returns of brotherly love, Let every one say, *Amen*.

A P R A C.

A PRACTICAL
E X P O S I T I O N
OF THE
EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL
TO
T I T U S,
IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E.

THE PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

THIS Epistle to *Titus* is most generally thought to have been wrote after the *first*, and before the *second* to *Timothy*; though *they* (being wrote to the same person) are put together in the collection of the sacred canon. *They* were formed for the direction of *Timothy*, and *this* of *Titus*, as Evangelists, that were assistant to the apostle, and watered the churches which he had planted; and therefore the tenor and style (as was to be expected) are much alike in this and those, especially *the first* of them, which cast a good deal of light upon one another; and are worthy the serious attention of all the ministers of the gospel, and New Testament churches of every age, for whose use they were ultimately designed, as far as there might be any thing common, or similar, in their respective circumstances.

Titus was an early *Gentile* convert, (*Gal. ii. 3.*) probably under the apostle *Paul's* ministry, who, in language like that to *Timothy*, calls him *his own son in the common faith*: (*chap. i. 4.*) And having for a considerable time tried, and found him to be diligent and faithful in the improvement of the spiritual gifts that were communicated to him, in all likelihood by the imposition of the apostles own hands, he at length advanced him from the state of a private Christian, or ordinary minister, to the high rank of an Evangelist; and left the care of the churches to him at *Crete*, that had been planted in several of its towns, or cities, by the apostle himself.

The particular *time* of the conversion of the *Cretians*, and of the apostle's leaving *Titus* with them, which is referred to, *chap. i. 5.* and in what *particular year* of our Lord, as also *from whence*, and by what *messenger*, this epistle was sent, is variously disputed by the learned, with great uncertainty; and, as far as I see, to little profit: But it appears from *chap. i. 5.* and *iii. 12.* to be past dispute, that it was wrote by the apostle *Paul* to *Titus*, while he was at liberty, and
Titus

Titus was doing the work of an evangelist at *Crete*, which is all that is necessary for establishing our belief of its divine authority.

Crete, which is now called *Candia*, from the name of its principal city, and is under the dominion of the *Turks*, is one of the finest islands for size, air, and soil, in the *Mediterranean*; but its ancient natives were infamous to a proverb for lying; and were much addicted to several other vices, according to the account that *Epimenides*, one of their own celebrated poets, gave of them, which the apostle recites, and calls a true one, *chap. i. 12*. And as there were very active judaizing Christians among the converts of this island, it is not much to be wondered at, that a people of so bad a constitutional temper, and so lately brought to the faith of Christ, were in danger of being ensnared by their artful insinuations: And as too many of them had been perverted by their means, and adversaries to the pure gospel were still very busy among them, the apostle sent this Epistle to furnish *Titus* with some farther directions how to behave in that critical situation, than he had given while he was with him, and before any thing of that kind had appeared among them.

After the introduction, in which he attests his own apostolic authority, to give a divine sanction to what he wrote, rather for obviating objections to *Titus's* acting according to it, than for his own satisfaction, who could have no doubt about it; he reminds him, that the chief design of his leaving him at *Crete* was to carry on the begun work of God, and ordain faithful and able pastors of the churches there, whose qualifications he describes much in the same manner as in *1 Tim. iii. 2, — 7*. and whose assistance would be needful to confute the judaizing deceivers, that were labouring to corrupt the faith and holiness of the gospel, *chap. i*. Then, in opposition to those sticklers for ceremonial rites, he advises *Titus* to preach with such authority in the name of Christ, as should raise him above contempt; and to recommend, by his own example, such a religious and moral behaviour of younger and older believers of both sexes, as, suitable to their respective ages, might be becoming sound doctrine, and persons professing godliness: And, in opposition to those, that would cancel the obligation of Christian servants to their unbelieving masters, he bids him exhort them to behave with good-humour and faithfulness, in fulfilling the duties of their relation to them, for the credit of the gospel, which teaches all holiness in every station of life, and encourages the practice of it by the joyful hopes of perfect happiness at Christ's glorious appearing; and shews that the very end of his redemption was to purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, *chap. ii*. And, in opposition to those that were for paying no regard to heathen magistrates, he recommends it to *Titus*, to remind all sorts of professing Christians of their obligations to be obedient to their civil governors; to be ready to every good work; to be inoffensive and courteous toward people of all ranks and characters; and enforces this from considerations of what they themselves were in their natural state, and of the happy change that was made upon them, by the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, and their justification to eternal life. These *Titus* was to insist upon, as the most powerful and evangelical motives

to believers to act up to character, in practising every thing that is good in itself, and useful to others; and was to avoid the empty, vain-jangling disputes of judaizers, and to reject self-condemned heretics, after a first and second admonition. Having now finished the main body of his Epistle, he adds an order for *Titus* to come to him at *Nicopolis*, where he proposed to spend the winter; and to provide all proper accommodations for *Zenar* and *Apollos*, whom he was to take in his way to him: And concludes with a general exhortation to all the professors of Christ's name, to attend to the duties of their places; with salutations to *Titus*, and to their Christian friends, and with his apostolic benediction to them all. Chap. iii.

C H A P. I.

The apostle asserts his character, salutes Titus, and reminds him of the work, for which he had left him at Crete, 1,—5. Draws out the qualifications of a faithful pastor, 6,—9. And describes the evil temper and practices of judaizing false teachers, that ought to be confuted, 10,—16.

TEXT.

PAUL a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth, which is after godliness;

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL the inspired writer of this Epistle, is, and counts it his honour, as a Christian and a minister, to be the devoted servant of the ever-blessed God, under the strictest and most inviolable bonds to him; and, though utterly unworthy in himself, he is still more highly dignified with the title and commission, qualifications, and powers of an extraordinary messenger, sent and instructed immediately by Jesus Christ, to bear witness to him, and preach his gospel of salvation, in all its extent, to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, according to the doctrine of faith, which is embraced by, and is the means of working effectual faith in God's own people, whom he originally made so, by his special, distinguishing, and eternal choice; (*Ephes. i. 4.*) and according to their knowledge, approbation, and confession of its infallible truth, which is suited, designed, and made effectual unto them, for promoting the principles and practice of real godliness in heart and life, as consisting of a sincere and devout performance of all religious duties, with a holy reverence, fear, and adoration of, trust in, and unreserved obedience to God, through Jesus Christ.

2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

2 This truth is believed and professed, with a corresponding practice of godliness, by them, in the exercise of a lively hope of an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance of eternal life, to which God, according to his abundant mercy has begotten them; (*1 Pet. i. 3, 4.*) and which he, who cannot possibly be false

or deceiving, but may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be true and faithful, has promised to Christ their Head for them, and to them, as federally comprehended in him, before the earliest date of time, even from all eternity, before any dispensations of grace commenced; and has given a specimen of, in the first promise after the fall, (*Gen. iii. 15.*) before any of the *Jewish* ages began. (See the note on 2 *Tim. i. 9.*)

3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour;

3 But which in the fulness of time, according to his eternal purpose, he has now clearly made known by the publication of his gospel, which is revealed, and committed, as a trust, in a special manner to me, his servant and apostle, (*ver. 1.*) to dispense it to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, according to the express appointment and command of our Lord Jesus Christ, (*Acts xxii. 17,—21. and xxvi. 15,—18.*) who is indeed God our Saviour, as by his incarnation he became Emanuel, God with us, and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. (*Chap. ii. 13, 14.* see the note there.)

4 To Titus mine own son after the common faith: grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

4 I, who am thus divinely inspired, and commissioned, send this epistle to you, my beloved Titus, who are as dear to me as any child can be to his own father, and are indeed in a spiritual sense my genuine son, as I was the instrument of begetting you to Christ, and bringing you both to the doctrine and grace of faith in him, which is common to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and to you and me; I heartily wish and pray, that the divine favour, tender compassion, and all manner of blessings for time and eternity, as included in the comprehensive term *peace*, may abound toward you from God the Father, as the fountain of all good, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, as the revealer, purchaser, and giver of it, who, in the execution of his office, is emphatically *our Saviour*.

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.

5 Now, to remind you of the end for which I told you I left you at *Crete*, when I last came from thence, you know it was, that you might carry on the good work begun there, and set to rights such things as are defective, or remain unfinished, with regard to doctrine, worship, discipline, and manners, in the churches which are planted in that island; and particularly that, in order hereunto, you, as an Evangelist and my deputy, might preside in solemnly setting apart, and constituting bishops or pastors, (*ver. 7.* see the notes on *Acts xx. 28.* and 1 *Pet. v. 2.*) that should be chosen by common suffrage to reside stably among, and take the oversight of the several churches in every town, or city, where they are seated; and to feed them with knowledge and understanding.

derstanding, (*Jer. iii. 15.*) according to the orders I gave, and in the manner I prescribed to you, before I took my leave of you.

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly.

6 As to the qualifications of a person that is fit and worthy to be invested with that office, He ought to be one of an unspotted reputation in his moral character, among his Christian acquaintance, and all around him; (*1 Tim. iii. 27.*) one that is clear from the sin of polygamy, as never being married to more than one wife at a time; and of causeless divorces, according to the corrupt custom of the *Jews*: (see the note *1 Tim. iii. 2.*) And, if he have children, see that he be one who brings them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and manages them with such prudence and authority, as, by the blessing of God, may be the means of winning them over to the faith of Christ, and to a faithful profession of his name, and discharge of all the duties of their civil and religious relations; and who never suffers any of his children to behave at such a rate, as shall fix upon them a brand of luxurious and dissolute, or of refractory, ungovernable, and disobedient youths, (*αυτοτακτα*) in their temper and manners, to the disgrace, not only of themselves, but of their fathers, and the gospel.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

7 For the nature of a pastor's or Christian bishop's office, the honour of religion, and the good of others, as well as of his own soul, require, that he be under no reproach or scandal in his life and conversation, or on account of any neglect or unfaithfulness in the discharge of his trust, as a steward of the mysteries of God, to dispense them impartially, and without reserve, that every one of Christ's family, under his ministerial inspection, may have his portion in due season; and he ought not to be of a head-strong, conceited, obstinate, inflexible temper; nor one of a hasty spirit; that takes fire at every little provocation, and presently falls into a passion; nor one that loves, and is addicted to immoderate drinking of strong liquors; nor contentious and violent in his behaviour, ready to fall foul upon them that displease him; nor one of a niggardly, sordid, covetous spirit, that is for getting all he can, and for keeping all he gets of the defiling pelf of this world; and, like a mercenary hireling, values the fleece more than the flock, and would take no pains in his work, were it not for a prospect of secular gain to himself.

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

8 But he ought to be a man of a liberal soul, that devises liberal things, and, according to his ability, takes pleasure, on all proper occasions, in acts of benevolence to religious strangers, as well as neighbours

and acquaintance, especially to ministers and Christians, that either go about to preach the gospel, or are driven from house and home, by the violence of persecutions. He ought to be a lover and encourager of good things, and to have a cordial affection to all sincere, honest, good, and pious men without exception; and to be himself modest and humble, grave and prudent, in his carriage; upright and faithful in all that he says and does; exemplarily holy in all manner of conversation and godliness; chaste and moderate in his desires, appetites, and pursuits of the pleasures of this life.

9 Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainlayers.

9 He likewise ought to be one that is well established in the great truths of the gospel, that holds them fast in his own faith and profession of them, and holds them forth in his ministry, and is steady in maintaining them, as the true and faithful sayings of God, which are to be believed and adhered to, just according to what he has been taught, and has learned from inspired writers, of *the faith which was once delivered to the saints*, (Jude, ver. 3.) that he may be capable of explaining, supporting, and defending the pure, uncorrupted, wholesome doctrine of Christ; and, by a due and proper application of it, (*παρηκαλειν*) to administer comfort to believers, and excite them to their duty; and to confute the errors of all opposers, silence their cavils, and rebuke their perverseness.

10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision:

10 For, as in several other places, so, I understand, among the professors at *Crete*, there are abundance of pretenders to Christianity, that are (*ανπιστατοι*) refractory and disorderly, not submitting to any divine rule, in doctrine or manners; and they are most pernicious, proud, self-conceited disputers, with vain jangling about empty things, to no good purpose; and crafty, sly seducers of the minds of the simple; I in a special manner have my eye upon the *Jewish* party among them, that make a profession of Christ, and yet contend for circumcision, and other rites of the law of *Moses*, as necessary to salvation.

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

11 For opposing such as these, It is highly necessary that pastors or Christian bishops be able ministers of the New Testament; and all possible fair means, by scriptural proofs, solid arguments, and good example, ought to be used for confuting and silencing those vain boasters, and deceitful workers, who are so indefatigable, subtle, and specious in their pretences, as to insinuate themselves into Christian families, (2 *Tim.* iii. 6.) and carry them off, as it were by wholesale, from the pure doctrines of the gospel to *Moses*; urging things unreasonably upon them, that are utterly false,

false, and absolutely inconsistent with the true way of salvation by Christ alone; which they do for the sake of heaping to themselves the sordid, defiling treasures of this world, by methods that are suited to impose upon such an infamous sort of people as the *Cretians*, * and that are agreeable to their own character, as such.

11 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The *Cretians* are always liars, evil beasts, slow believers.

12 For one of their own countrymen, a celebrated *Greek* poet, which sprung from among themselves, and thoroughly knew their national temper, even *Epimenides* by name, whom they esteem as a prophet, and who, as a poet, is customarily called a prophet; He says, in a description of the natives of *Crete*, that they are naturally a set of scandalous people, ever addicted to falsehood and lying; sly and savage in their temper, like wild beasts; perfect gluttons in indulging their ravenous appetites, and, as is common for persons of such a luxurious turn, exceeding lazy, and backward to every useful employment, and so exposed to all sorts of temptations.

13 This witness is true; wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be found in the faith.

14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

13, 14 And truly this is a just testimony against them, as has been proved in numberless instances, and too plainly appears by the perfidious, mischievous, and sensual management of the judaizing Christians, and of those that fall in with them at this very day: It behoves you therefore to deal plainly and smartly with a people of such a vile and brutish temper, with whom mildness will not do; but who must be cut to the quick, in laying before them their sin and danger, with due severity, that neither the deceivers, nor the deceived, may dare any longer to persist in their evil principles and practices; but may be recovered to a right mind, and settled in the true and uncorrupted doctrines of faith; and may be so entirely brought over to them, as never more to listen after, attend to, or believe and be carried away with, the fallacious stories that the *Jews* tell of their traditions, and with the imperious injunctions of men, that are prejudiced against, and gone off from the truth of the gospel, and insist on an observation of ceremonial rites, such as relate, among others, to meats and drinks, and persons and things, that were clean or unclean, according to the distinctions of the *Levitical* law; but are no longer obligatory under the New Testament dispensation.

15 Unto

N O T E.

* If, as is very probable, these deceivers themselves were *Cretians*, the apostle with good reason seems to suggest, that they act like themselves in all their self-seeking and delusive arts, and that the

people they had to do with, were fit materials, prepared ready to their hands, for them to work upon, as appears from the following account of them.

15 Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

15 Unto real Christians, whose hearts are purified by faith, and consciences purged by the blood of Christ, all things that God hath not forbidden under the gospel-state may be lawfully esteemed clean, and may be touched and eat, without the least moral defilement; and they have a sanctified use of them: But unto those, that are unregenerated, and under the power of sin, and of unbelief with respect to gospel-truths, and that adhere to Mosaical institutions, instead of cleaving to Christ alone; Unto such, whatever their pretences be to Christianity, nothing, no, not things that are most lawful and good in themselves, can be clean and pure; nor can they use them without sin and defilement; the reason of which is, because even their understandings and consciences themselves, those leading and directive powers of the soul, are sadly misguided and corrupted.

16 They indeed make high professions, and boast of their knowledge of the true God, and of the revelation of his mind and will, as though they herein excelled all others: (*Rom. ii. 17,—20.*) But their practices are a direct contradiction to, and confutation of all such pretences; They, in effect, deny by their deeds, what they affirm in words, being, in reality most detestable enemies to God and godliness; and, giving no credit to the gospel-revelation, they are disobedient to his authority in it, and utterly injudicious, and unsuited for the performance of any good work; and so are highly disapproved of God, and *reprobate silver shall men call them; because the Lord hath rejected them.* (*Jer. vi. 30.* see the note on 2 Cor. xiii. 5.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what readiness of mind, and sense of duty, should ministers and private Christians, in their respective places, pay a conscientious regard to the inspired directions of the great apostle of the *Gentiles*, whose authority is divine, and whose benevolent wishes were for grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ! How much soever others may despise, or corrupt the gospel, God's elect will embrace and own it, as calculated, and rendered effectual in them, for promoting the practice of godliness: And when they experience its holy effects upon themselves, what a support is it to their hope of everlasting life, which the unchangeably faithful and true God promised to Christ for them, and to them in him, before all worlds; and has now made known with the clearest evidence, in the gospel-revelation, and by the ministry of it! With what cautious care, and attention to due qualifications, should they proceed, who are engaged in setting persons apart to the pastoral office in the churches of Christ, according to apostolical appointment! And how concerned should such pastors themselves be, that their moral characters be clear; that, if they are married, it be but to one wife at a time; and that the children, which God may give them, be orderly, and trained up in the faith of Christ, and not chargeable with riots, or refractory disobedience; that they themselves be neither humoursomely obstinate, nor passionate, nor litigious, nor tipplers, nor covetous; but generous and hospitable; lovers of all good men, and of every good thing; grave and prudent, just and righteous toward men, holy and religious toward God, chaste and temperate in all things;

things; and that they hold fast the true doctrine of Christ in their faith, profession, and preaching, just as they received it from him and his apostles; and be such masters of it, as to be able to maintain and defend it against all opposition, and to apply it for duty and comfort, like good stewards of the household of faith! With what diligence should they endeavour, not by force, but by scripture and reason, to silence obstinate, self-conceited vain boasters and deceivers, that turn away from the truth, and pervert multitudes by their false notions, to enrich themselves with sordid and defiling gains! And with what just severity (when milder methods fail) should they reprove such professors, as, like the *Cretians*, are perfidious, brutish, luxurious, and idle, that they may be brought to reject all fabulous traditions, and impositions of men upon conscience, and may be found in the faith! Ah! How wretched is the case of formalists in religion, who are neither cleansed from their sins, nor have true faith in Christ; whose evil practices contradict their verbal professions, and proud boasts of superior knowledge of God, and of his mind and will! They, at the same time, are odious in his sight, as their minds and consciences are defiled, and as they neither believe nor obey the gospel-revelation, and are utterly void of judgment, and of holy dispositions for any good work. But what a mercy is it to be pure and upright in heart, through the cleansing virtue of the blood and spirit of Jesus! To persons of the *former* character every thing is deluding; but to those of the *latter*, all lawful things are sanctified for their use, and may be improved to the glory of God, and the good of their own souls.

C H A P. II.

The apostle directs Titus to inculcate such duties upon younger and older Christians, as are becoming sound doctrine, and to be exemplary in them himself, 1,—8. To enjoin believing servants to be obedient to their masters, for the honour of the doctrine of Christ, which they profess, 9, 10. And to enforce all this from a consideration of the holy design of the gospel, from the prospect it gives of heavenly glory, and from the end of Christ's death, which equally concern believers of all ranks and stations, and are to be urged upon them with all becoming authority, 11,—15.

TEXT.

BUT speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

PARAPHRASE.

MANY are the deluding and deluded people of corrupt minds and manners, that surround you, which have been spoken of; (*chap. i. 10,—16.*) But, in opposition to them, let it be your special care to preach and insist upon such doctrines and duties as are agreeable to, and put an honour upon the solid, pure, wholesome, and healing gospel of Christ, which is a doctrine according to godliness, (*chap. i. 1. and 1 Tim. vi. 3.*) and lays the highest obligations to holiness and obedience upon all its professors, of what age, sex, or station soever they be.

2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience:

2 Put the more elderly Christian brethren in mind, that, suitable to their age and profession, they ought to be (*νεφελους*) very watchful, circumspect, and sedate in their temper and carriage; to behave with a venerable gravity (*σωφρονος*) and due decorum in their dress, mein, and air, and in all that they say and do; to be prudent (*σωφρονως*) in their conduct, and temperate

temperate in eating and drinking; uncorrupt, as to the doctrines of faith, and sincere in believing them, and living answerable to them; abounding in love to God, in cordial affection to all the saints for his sake, and in Christian benevolence to people of all nations, ranks, and characters, as fellow-creatures; and to be patient under tribulations and offences, and in subduing their own peevish passions, and bearing with the infirmities of others*.

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

3 Inculcate also upon religious elderly women, that they ought to be exemplary (*ἐν κατεσκευασίᾳ*) in dress, and all regular deportment, as becomes such holy professors; and to take great heed that they be not, like the devil himself, (*διδάσκων*) false accusers, slanderers, or backbiters of others, to the injury of their reputation; nor inclined, much less given up, to any excess of drinking wine, or other intoxicating liquors, under pretence of recruiting the strength and spirits of a decaying nature; and that, instead of amusing young people with old wives fables, (1 Tim. iv. 7.) they should entertain them with profitable discourse, and recommend, by counsel and example, every thing, that is good and laudable, as to speech, apparel, and behaviour:

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

4, 5 Particularly, that they should instruct, and endeavour to influence, younger women to be wise, and cautious of every thing that savours of lewdness or lightness; and, if they be married, to carry themselves in an affectionate and endearing manner toward their husbands, being in heart for them, and for no other man; and, according to the dictates of nature and religion, to be concerned for the happiness of such children as God may graciously give them, and to show their love to them, not with a foolish fondness, to the neglect of needful reproof, or corrections for their faults, as there may be occasion, which, in effect, would be hating, instead of loving them, (Prov. iii. 24. and xxiii. 13, 14.) but with a prudent, solid, Christian-like tenderness and kindness, to encourage them in every thing that is good, and to do all that in them lies for their temporal, spiritual, and eternal welfare: As also to manage every thing with discretion; to be modest and virtuous with all purity of manners; to be careful and industrious housewives, not gadding about like idle busy-bodies, (1 Tim. v.

13.)

N O T E.

* Some have thought that *aged* men are mentioned by way distinction from and women, in this and the next verse, *ver. 4, 5, 6.* the context determines the reference to *elderly persons*, as *superiors*; and *elders in office* had been and *women* and not private Christians, described in the preceding chapter.

13.) but keeping as much as may be at home, and minding the affairs of their families; to be meek and good tempered toward their servants, and all they have to do with; and to pay due respect and obedience, in all lawful things, to their husbands, that they may never give the least occasion for any to speak reproachfully of the word or ways of God, as though these encouraged any disorderly practice.

6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

6 In like manner, advise and excite young men, professing Christianity, to be considerate, chaste, meek, and sober; and to maintain a due government of their temper and passions, which are apt to be too warm and impetuous, rash, proud, wilful, and frolicsome, at their blooming age.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

8 Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part, may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

7, 8 And if you would have these things believed and practised by others, Be especially careful to draw them out to the life, and recommend them in your own behaviour, by being yourself an exact pattern of every thing that is good and excellent in itself, and beneficial to men: And, in all your preaching, deliver nothing but the pure, unmixed doctrine of Christ, with disinterested single aims at the glory of God and the good of souls; with becoming seriousness and venerable gravity; and with all simplicity and godly sincerity; and in such scriptural, easy, and significant language, as is suited to convey your ideas in a plain, determinate meaning, according to the truth of the gospel; and as shall neither mislead your hearers, nor be justly objected to, either for its ambiguity, obscurity, or falshood; that so your most critical, carping, and cavilling enemies may even blush and be confounded, as finding that there is no room for the reproaches, and invidious charges of error in doctrine, or misdemeanor in practice, which they were endeavouring to fasten upon you, and your followers.

9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again.

9 And whereas there are some judaizers, who would persuade such converted slaves, as are the property of heathen masters, that it is not lawful for them to continue in their service, You ought to guard against such an encroachment on civil rights; and press upon all believing servants, whether slaves or others, the duty of continuing, as much as ever, and upon better principles than ever before, to be obedient in all lawful things to their earthly masters, *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward;* (1 Pet. ii. 18.) and to endeavour to behave in such a courteous, obliging, and diligent manner, as shall win their favour, and give them a great deal of pleasure in seeing all their just and reasonable commands executed: And exhort servants to be so well satisfied with their station, and the duties of it, as cheerfully

to attend to them, without murmuring, or disputing against them, or returning rude and saucy answers, when they are ordered to do any thing they do not like, or are reprov'd for their faults.

10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

10 And charge them to be strictly just and honest; (see *Eph.* vi. 5, 6. and *Col.* iii. 22, 23.) never daring to waste, embezzle, or secret to their own use, any of their master's goods, money, or provisions, beyond his allowance of what is fit and needful for them; but always to be approving themselves, as good and faithful servants, that punctually obey his orders, and do the best they can for his honour and advantage, like persons that make his interest their own; (*ver.* 13) to the end that they may be a credit to the gospel, and to their holy profession of it, and may thereby strike conviction upon the consciences of their infidel masters themselves, as well as others, of the excellency, purity, and power of the doctrine of the blessed God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, (*ver.* 13. see the note there) with regard to all civil and moral, as well as religious duties, in every relation of life.

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men:

11 For the gospel of the grace of God, particularly under the New Testament-dispensation of it, (*Ephes.* iii. 2.) which is the effect of his free favour, and reveals it to us; and is the means of working grace in our hearts, as it brings glad tidings of deliverance from sin and wrath, and of eternal happiness through Jesus Christ, and shows the way of obtaining this great salvation by faith in him, has now shone forth in all its light and glory, (*επιφανισμῶν*) like the rising sun, upon all nations, to whom he ordered it to be preached, (*Mat.* xxviii. 19. and *Mark* xvi. 15.) and upon all sorts of the sinful sons and daughters of men, whether *Jews* or *heathens*, young or old, masters or servants. (*ver.* 2,—9.)

12 Teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;

12 And its great and holy tendency and design, together with its effectual working in those of us who believe, is to teach and oblige us, whatever our civil stations be, that, renouncing, abhorring and utterly forsaking all infidelity, idolatry, and impiety of every kind, contrary to *the first table* of the moral law; and all irregular inclinations and desires, contrary to *the second table*, which consist in *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, (*1 John* iii. 16.) and which worldly minded men indulge and gratify, and place their happiness in; that, abandoning and detesting all these, we should be wisely careful to lead a life of purity and sanctity, in a due government of our passions and appetites; in a just, honest, equitable and benevolent behaviour toward men, doing by them as we would be done by; (*Luke* vi.

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

31.) and in all acts of public and private worship and devotion toward God; according to his word, in the exercise of every grace, and celebration of all his ordinances, and observance of all his commandments, as long as we continue in this present world of sin, temptation, and snares.

13 And it teaches, encourages, and animates us to do all this, by the most constraining motives, as persons who look with an eye of faith, and wait with earnest expectation and longing desire, and yet with submissive patience, for the perfect, all-comprehending, and everlasting felicity of the heavenly state, in the immediate presence of Christ, which is the great object of our joyful hope; and for the illustrious appearing of the great and mighty God, (*Isa. ix. 6.*) * even our dear Lord, Redeemer, and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, at his second coming without sin to salvation, (*Heb. ix. 28.*) will appear on his throne of judgment, like himself, in all the majesty, beauty, grandeur, and brightness of his divine and mediatorial glory, and in the glory of his Father, and of all his holy surrounding angels; (*Matt. xvi. 27. and xxv. 31. and Mark viii. 38.*) and will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe. (*2 Thes. i. 10.*)

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

14 And what may we not look and hope for from him, who loved us, at so high, matchless, and astonishing a rate, as freely to devote and give up his own great self, soul and body, to the most painful and ignominious death of the cross? This he willingly suffered for our sakes, and in our room and stead, (*1 Pet. iii. 18.*) that he might effectually redeem us by his blood from the power and tyranny, as well as from the guilt and punishment, of all our sins, and at length from the in-being of them; and might sanctify,

I i 2

N O T E.

* It seems to me, that our Lord Jesus Christ, is meant by God our Saviour, ver. 10. he being, most strictly speaking, the Saviour, and most frequently styled in the New Testament our Saviour, and very often God; and may be considered, as there distinguished from God the Father, whose gospel of grace is said to have appeared to all men in the next verse: However, I am well satisfied, that he is meant here by the great God, and, or as I think it might be better rendered, even our Saviour Jesus Christ; because the article in the Greek is prefixed to the great God, and not repeated before our Saviour Jesus Christ, in which position of the article the last title is usually, though not al-

ways, exegetical of the first, to intimate that they both belong to the same subject; (see the note on *Eph. i. 1.*) and in all the New Testament the Father is never said to appear: But we often read of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ to judgment, which is represented, as what will be exceeding glorious; and he is spoken of, by way of emphasis, as our hope, and the hope of glory. (*Col. i. 27. and 2 Tim. i. 1.*) And though Christ will come in his Father's as well as his own glory; yet it is not the person of the Father, but of the Son, that will then come, and make his appearance, *Col. iii. 4. and 1 Pet. v. 4.* (See my discourse on *Jesus Christ God-man*, pag. 58, 59.)

fy, cleanse, and separate us to himself for sacred use, and for his glory, as his special, precious, and peculiar property, by his Father's gift, his own purchase, and our own free and full consent in the day of his power, that we might be zealously affected towards him and his cause, and fervent in spirit to serve him in the performance of every work, which in its own nature, or by his appointment, and in his account, is good and honourable, as being done upon good principles to good ends, and in a right manner, according to the good rule laid down in his word.

15 These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

15 These are things of so vast importance, and are so vehemently opposed, or corrupted by the enemies of Christ and his gospel, that you ought to be very earnest in preaching and inculcating them, and in sharply reproving the men and their errors and vices, that set themselves against them; and you should do this with all the authority that Christ has given you in the execution of your office. All this ought to be managed with such prudence, faithfulness, and gravity, as shall raise you, and your office, above the contempt of your most scornful and haughty enemies.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How carefully should ministers adhere to, preach, and apply the pure doctrine of the gospel, and the duties that are answerable to it, for exhortation, consolation, and reproof, as there may be occasion; and do this with such gravity, sincerity, faithfulness, and authority in the name of Christ, and with such plain scriptural language, and exemplary behaviour in their own lives, as shall raise them above contempt, and make their enemies ashamed of their endeavours to reproach them! The duties, as well as doctrines of Christianity, are to be taught and urged, not only in a general way, but with particular application, as occasions require, to believers of all circumstances and conditions; to aged men and women, that they may be grave, serious, temperate in all things, sound in the faith, instructive and exemplary in every grace, as becomes persons of their standing in years, and in their holy profession; to younger people of both sexes, that they may be prudent, chaste, and temperate, and may be wise and affectionate in discharging the duties of their respective relations; and to servants of all ranks, that they may study to please their earthly masters of every character; and may be obedient to their just commands, faithful, industrious, and strictly honest, in managing all their affairs, and not pert and arrogant in giving word for word: Such behaviour reflects an honour upon their Christian profession, and the gospel of the grace of God. And O what a blessed gospel is this! It teaches, and obliges the professors of it, to abandon all irreligion and profaneness, and all inordinate inclinations to the pleasures and honours of this world; and to live in the practice of all sobriety, honesty, and piety; and it encourages them to look and hope for the heavenly happiness: which shall be brought to every true believer at the blessed and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, who is the great God and their Saviour; and who gave himself to death for them, that he might redeem them from the guilt and dominion, and at length from the remainders of all sin, and might sanctify them for himself, as a peculiar people, zealously devoted to God, and cheerfully abounding in all good works to his praise and glory.

C H A P. III.

The apostle goes on to give orders about obedience to civil magistrates, and a becoming behaviour towards all men, 1, 2. Inforces them from a consideration of what believers themselves were before conversion, and are made to be, through Jesus Christ, by regenerating and justifying grace, 3,—7. Puts Titus upon urging these things, to the end that good works may be practised by believers, and upon avoiding vain and useless disputes, 8, 9. Insists on his rejecting a heretic, after due admonition, 10, 11. Desires that he would come, and bring Zenas and Apollos with him to Nicopolis, recommends good works for necessary purposes, 12,—14. And concludes, as usual, with salutations, and a benediction, 15.

TEXT.

PUT them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.

PARAPHRASE.

AS judaizing zealots endeavour to dissuade Christians from owning the authority of heathen governors, you ought to guard them against an error, so contrary to the design of the gospel, and destructive to the political state, and to the civil power of rulers over it: Let therefore all the professors of Christ's name be admonished of their duty, to be peaceably submissive to supreme and subordinate governors; (1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.) and to pay a conscientious obedience to all the just laws of civil magistrates, who, whether they be Christians or not, are ordained of God for the good of the community; (Rom. xiii. 1,—4. see the notes there) and to be cheerfully willing to do every lawful thing that they require; as also to perform every duty, that is owing to persons of all degrees and stations, yea, good works of every kind, relating to God, ourselves, and others.

2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

2 Caution them likewise against reviling any one, of whatever rank, nation, or religion he be; against falsely charging any crime upon him; or exposing his character, with an ill design, by divulging even the bad things he may be guilty of; or ever doing it at all, unless some valuable end is to be answered by it; Warn them against a litigious, quarrelsome temper and behaviour, to the disturbance of civil or religious communities: Teach them, on the contrary, to be of an equitable, candid, yielding spirit; and to manifest an humble, mild, and good temper in all their words and actions, towards all sorts of men, even enemies, and ungodly people themselves.

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived,

3 And we surely ought to be ready to go into such an humble and candid disposition toward those that are no worse than we once were, and, if left to ourselves, should still have been: For while we were in

ceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

5 Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration

in a state of nature, under the power of the corruptions that reigned in us, even we ourselves were then destitute of all spiritual knowledge and wisdom relating to our duty and happiness; were disobedient to God, and to his holy, just, and good laws; were wandering (*πλανημένοι*) from him, and from the way of life and peace, being seduced by the treachery of our own hearts, by false teachers, and the temptations of Satan, and of this evil world; were perfect slaves to various sinful inclinations and sensual pleasures; yea, were spending our time in a malicious way of wishing and doing ill to those that did not please us, and in envious thoughts at the honour and advantages of those that were above us: And so, upon the whole, we were most detestable creatures, odious in ourselves, and to God and all good men*; and full of bitter enmity one against another, according to our different passions and interests, and most flagrantly so, as we were either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, who reciprocally had an implacable aversion to each other, as such.

4 But a holy and happy change was made upon us, who were in those hideous circumstances, when the transcendent benignity of God, who contrived, ordained, and brought about, our salvation by Jesus Christ, and his astonishing *philanthropy*, (*φιλανθρωπία*) or special loving-kindness to sinners of mankind, in distinction from the fallen angels, (*επεφάνη*) broke out, and shone forth with illustrious and reviving beams, upon us, in the preaching of the gospel, and in the *rising of the Sun of righteousness* himself upon our souls, *with healing in his wings*. (Mal. iv. 2.)

5 As we had so deeply plunged ourselves into all that is vile and hateful, It neither was, nor could be, in consideration of any good or holy works which we had performed, that God was induced to show us so high favour, there having been nothing of that kind, but every thing of a contrary strain found in us; but it was merely of his own free, self-moving, and

N O T E.

* *Hating one another* (*μισούντες ἀλλήλους*) seems directly to point to the national enmity that was between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and as there was as much on the *Jews* part against the *Gentiles*, as on the *Gentiles* against the *Jews*, and rather more, it carries a strong intimation, that the apostle does not, in this and the following verses, speak merely of the wretched vile state of the *Gentiles* by nature, and their recovery by grace; but of mankind in general, inclusive of the *Jews*, and of himself and *Titus*, as well as others:

And, upon the closest attention, I cannot find one character in the whole description, that may not be applied in common to them; much less can I think, with some, that the apostle should all along mean only himself, in an argument to enforce upon all believers the duties he had before been recommending to them; and *that*, without giving the least hint of such a design in the variation of his style, or in the tenor of his discourse, or in any part of the preceding or following verses.

neration, and re-
newing of the holy
Ghost;

undeserved and forfeited, yea, abused and provoked mercy, and according to its own compassionate propensions, that he brought us out of that deplorable condition into a state of salvation, through the cleansing virtue of regenerating grace, which was signified by our baptism with water, (see the note on *Eph. v. 26.*) and was effected by that renovation in the spirit of our minds, which was wrought in us by the special operation of the Holy Spirit.

6 Which he
shed on us abun-
dantly, through
Jesus Christ our
Saviour:

6 Which Holy Spirit, in his gifts and graces, God the Father poured out from on high upon us with the greatest riches and abundance, according to his infinite mercy, (*ver. 5.*) and his promise relating to gospel-times, (*Isa. xlv. 3.* see the notes on *Acts ii. 38, 41.*) through the mediation, merit, and exaltation of Jesus Christ, who is our immediate Saviour, as he purchased all-salvation for us, and bestows it upon us;

7 That being
justified by his
grace, we should
be made heirs ac-
cording to the hope
of eternal life.

7 That being brought into a state of pardon and acceptance with God to eternal life, through faith in him, under the Spirit's influence, and so discharged from guilt and condemnation by the free grace of God, on account of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ the Saviour, we might be brought as children into his family; (*John i. 12.*) and, being *children*, might be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and be glorified together with him, (*Rom. viii. 17.*) according to the solid ground of hope, which God has given us in Christ, and in the promises, and the *grace* of hope, which he has wrought in us upon that ground, of inheriting eternal life through a Redeemer.

8 This is a faith-
ful saying, and
these things I will
that thou affirm
constantly, that
they which have
believed in God,
might be careful
to maintain good
works: these things
are good and pro-
fitable unto men.

8 All that I have been saying is a true and faithful word, (*λογος*) which may, and ought to be, firmly believed; and I would have you frequently assert and insist upon these important things in the course of your ministry, relating to the wretched state of man by nature, and the rich mercy of God through Jesus Christ our Saviour, for regeneration, justification, and eternal life, (*us*) to the end that those, who have believed in God through Christ, according to the gospel-revelation, might be induced, and excited thereby, to use the utmost care and diligence to abound, excel, and lead the way to others, (*καλῶν ἔργων περιττῶσαι*) in all such works, as are honourable to God, and Christ, and to the Christian character. These doctrines, and the good works to which they manifestly tend, are every way excellent in their own nature; and though God cannot be profited by them, they are exceeding useful and beneficial to mankind.

9 But

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law: for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject:

11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

9 But keep yourself clear off, and endeavour to discountenance those senseless, idle, doating questions, that judaizing teachers are so fond of; and those intricate endless genealogies, for making out their own lineage from this and the other particular tribe and family, (see the first note on 1 Tim. i. 4) which are of no manner of advantage, after the Messiah has come, and put an end to their church-state and polity; as also their litigious controversies, and warm contentings about the sense and obligation of the ceremonial law, which they would introduce into the gospel dispensation: For all these disputes are entirely useless, as answering no good purpose: Nay, they are (*μωρὰ*) foolish and prejudicial, as turning to a very bad account, for sowing discord, corrupting the gospel of Christ, and hindering the practice of real godliness.

10 If any professor of Christianity, or member of a church, entertain and boldly assert such errors, as overthrow the foundation doctrines of the gospel; and especially if he evidently appear to do it with a heretical heart, to gratify his own pride, and make himself the head of a contrary sect, or out of prejudice against the truths themselves, because they lie in direct opposition to his own lusts; let him be solemnly admonished and warned, a first and second time, of his sin and danger; and if, after this, he shall still obstinately persist in his destructive errors; reject him and all communion with him; avoid his company; caution others against him; and have nothing to do with such an incorrigible heresiarch, or sectary of his stamp.

11 For you may be well satisfied, that such a man is utterly turned off from Christ, the foundation, and from all goodness; and that he sins against his own soul, if not against his own conscience, and sins against the divine authority, light and truth of the gospel-revelation: His own avowing, and persisting in these pernicious errors, is sufficient, without any further proof, to convict him of them; and so out of his own mouth he is judged, as being self-condemned: And he hereby practically passes judgment against, and condemns himself, as not fit to stand in any relation to, or have any fellowship with, the true church of Christ*.

12 I have

N O T E

* The paraphrase hints the common notion of a *heretic*, as one that appears to be so wicked and perverse, as to act against his own conscience in broaching and maintaining fundamental error: him, without any further proof. But it chiefly goes upon what I take to be the true notion of *self-condemned*, (*αυτοκατακριτος*) as signifying one whose *own confession* is enough to convict him, without any further proof. In this manner

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

12 I have given you these brief instructions, how to conduct in your present critical situation; and hope to have an opportunity of adding what may be of further use to you, in personal conversation, as soon as I can well spare, and shall send either *Artemas* or *Tychicus*, a beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord, (Eph. vi. 21.) to supply your place, and take care of the churches at *Crete*: As soon as either of them arrive, I beg that you would make all convenient speed in coming to me at *Nicopolis**, where you will probably meet with me: For I purpose, God willing, to go thither in a little time, and take up my winter-quarters there.

13 And

NOTES.

manner we may understand a person to be self-condemned, or condemned of himself, when evidence of the charge against him rises from his own confession, without any need of further witnesses. Thus *Job* said, (chap. ix. 20.) *If I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse*; that is, my own words would condemn me, as a vain proud boaster: And *Eliphaz* said of *Job*, (chap. xv. 5, 6.) *Thy mouth utters thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty; thine own mouth condemns thee, and not I; yea, thine own lips testify against thee*. When the slothful servant hid his Lord's talent in a napkin, and went about to excuse it by a dishonourable and unjust charge against his Lord himself, *He said unto him, Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee, thou wicked servant*; (Luke xix. 22.) and when our Lord owned himself to be the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, the high priest rent his clothes, and said, *What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy, what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death*. (Mark xiv. 62, 63, 64.) It appears from all these instances, that by a person's own confession, whether of real or supposed crimes, he is looked upon as self-condemned. And in the account that men shall give of every idle word in the day of judgment, Christ says, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*. (Mat. xii. 36, 37.)

* This *Nicopolis* is most probably judged, by Bishop *Pearson*, and others, to be, not, as the postscript of this epistle says, in *Macedonia*, but a town of that name upon the sea-coast of *Epirus*, a

province of *Greece*, on the west towards *Italy*. (See *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part 2. p. 69.) But, wherever it was, it is plain that this epistle was not written from thence, as the postscript further makes it; for, had the apostle been then at *Nicopolis*, it would have been most proper for him to have said, I have determined to winter here, and not there. (xiii.) This also shows that he was then at liberty; and gives ground to think, that this epistle was wrote between his first and second imprisonment at *Rome*: And his desiring *Titus* to come to him at *Nicopolis*, and proposing to send *Artemas*, or *Tychicus* to supply his place at *Crete*, carries a strong intimation, that *Titus* was not, as some would have it, and the postscript avers, the first bishop of the church of the *Cretians*; but that he was an evangelist, who, according to the nature of that office, had no fixed residence; but travelled about, as occasions required, from place to place, to assist the apostles in their work, and come to them, or go on their messages, wherever they might send them. We have no certain account of this *Artemas*, nor of *Zenas* the lawyer, mentioned in the next verse, beyond what is here said of them; but *Titus*, no doubt, well knew them, at least by name, to be persons of worthy character; and *Zenas* being joined with *Apollos*, (ver. 13.) who was a Jew, is thought by some to have been an interpreter of the Jewish law; but *Grotius* supposes, that he might be a Roman lawyer, as not doubting but that many such became ministers of Christ; because they saw that all just and righteous precepts were eminently contained in his religion.

13. Bring Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos, on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

14. And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

15. All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all Amen.

13. And when you set out for that place, take care to bring *Zenas* the lawyer, and the zealous, laborious, and eloquent *Apollos*, (*Acts* xviii. 24, 25.) along with you; and to provide every thing that may be needful to bear their expences, and accommodate them in their journey, that nothing proper and convenient for them in the way may be deficient, or lacking to them.

14. And leave it as a charge with all our Christian friends and brethren at *Crete*, and wherever you meet with them, that they be prompt and willing to excel in such good works of benevolence and hospitality, by entertaining religious strangers, and especially such gospel-preachers, as I have been but now recommending to you, (*ver.* 12, 13.) and indeed in every good work, that is laudable and useful, for the necessary purposes of glorifying God, and *doing good to all men, and especially to them of the household of faith*, (*Gal.* vi. 10.) that they may *neither be unprofitable to them, nor barren or unfruitful themselves, in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* (*2 Pet.* i. 8.)

15. All the Christian brethren, who are at present here, join with me in sending their affectionate salutations in the Lord, particularly to yourself: And as I have wrote this letter for the use and benefit of the churches in *Crete*, as well as for your own direction in the discharge of your office toward them, I desire that the like kind salutations may be presented to all those of them, that sincerely love us, with a Christian love, for the sake of that faith, which we embrace and preach, profess and propagate, which they themselves also have received, and which works by love. May the free favour of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, together with all its manifestations, and blessed fruits, abound towards all and every one of you: (*see 2 Cor.* xiii. 14.) This I heartily wish and pray may be, and humbly hope and trust will be your happy case, in token of which I sincerely and affectionately add, *Amen.*

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How friendly is the Christian religion to civil government, and to an universal benevolence toward persons of every rank and character! And what sweet and powerful arguments does it afford to every work of piety toward God, of self-government, and of tenderness to the *characters*, together with meekness and gentleness toward the *persons* of all mankind, whether friends or foes! May we often think how wretchedly vile we were, in our natural state, to make us humble in our own eyes, and favourable in our dispositions towards others that are in like deplorable circumstances still! We ourselves were foolish, disobedient, wanderers from God and goodness, slaves to sensual passions and appetites, malicious, envious, odious, and bitter enemies to the happiness of one or other of our fellow creatures. But O the riches and freeness of divine mercy and grace, which, notwithstanding all

all this unworthiness and sinfulness, has made a blessed change in our temper and condition, by means of the gospel, when it came to us in the light and energy of the Spirit! We are hereby brought into a state of grace, regenerated, justified, and made heirs of eternal life, and have the most solid grounds for a comfortable and assured hope of a complete enjoyment of it. And O with what affecting demonstration does it appear, that this could never be for the sake of any good thing done by, or found in, such abominable sinners as we were; but is all entirely owing to the mere mercy and grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, and is made effectual to us by the special operation of his Spirit! that the glory of it all may be ascribed to the Sacred Three, according to their joint agency, and concernment in bringing about our salvation! And how should these true and important sayings of God, be often inculcated, and impressed upon the minds and hearts of believers, for exciting and engaging their diligent care to excel in all works of piety, righteousness, and charity, that are good and lovely in themselves, and useful to mankind! How should they shun all trifling, contentious, and unprofitable disputes about religion! And with what seriousness should obstinate heretics be warned of their dangerous errors, by orderly admonitions! But, in case of contumacy, with what detestation should they be rejected, as persons that would overthrow the foundation of the Christian faith, and that evidently labour at this, and persist in it, as their own self-condemning profession sufficiently testifies, whether it be against the dictates of their own consciences or not! But how sincerely affectionate should sound believers be one to another, as partakers of the same common faith; and how ready to assist each other in all their wants, and to give, and receive mutual Salutations in the Lord! May the love and grace of God the Father, Son, and Spirit, be with all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth!

Amen.

A PRACTICAL
E X P O S I T I O N
OF THE
EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL
TO
P H I L E M O N,
IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E.

THE PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

THIS Epistle to *Philemon*, though very short, and wrote (as some think about the year 60, or, as others say, 63) on a private occasion, is very nervous, entertaining, and instructive. It is the most perfect pattern of familiar letter-writing, every way worthy of the great apostle, and of our esteem and imitation: It gives us a most remarkable instance of the free and sovereign grace of God to as abandoned a wretch as can well be imagined; and of Providence's over-ruling, even his wickedness to subserve the design of grace towards him: And it contains the liveliest sentiments of flowing tenderness, generosity, and humanity, and the finest art of persuasive rhetoric and genteel address, together with the native beauty of Christian compassion, condescension, charity, and love. The characters, under which the apostle speaks of himself, and of *Philemon* and *Onesimus*, with the representations he makes of their respective circumstances, and the judicious structure of the whole epistle, with every thought, and indeed every word, from first to last, in its proper place, are calculated with almost inimitable dexterity, and yet with a natural, unaffected, easy turn, and godly sincerity, to answer its main point in view.

Philemon, to whom this letter was wrote, appears in the light of an eminent Christian, though, perhaps, naturally of a stiff temper, and too apt to resent offences: He, probably, was a person of considerable worldly substance, and converted by the apostle's instrumentality, *ver. 1.—4*, and *7.—19*.; and he seems to have been a *Colossian*; for *Onesimus* is said to be *one of them*, *Col. iv. 9*.; and *Archippus*, who is saluted here, (*ver. 2*.) is directed to take heed to his ministry there, *Col. iv. 17*.

Onesimus, on whose behalf the apostle wrote, was *Philemon's* slave, and had turned a thief and runagate, who, in his rambles, came

came to *Rome*, at the time of the apostle *Paul's* first confinement there, as appears from the hope he expresses of his coming to *Colosse*, ver. 22. answerable to like expressions of it in that situation, *Phil.* i. 25. and ii. 24.; whereas, in his second imprisonment, he had no doubt but that the time of his departure was then at hand, *2 Tim.* iv. 6.; but, in his first imprisonment, he was allowed to preach to company that came to him in his own hired house, where he dwelt as a prisoner at large, *Acts* xxviii. 30, 31. (See the note there.) And *Onesimus*, being brought by the providence of God under these ministrations, the Holy Spirit set the word home upon his heart to make it effectual for his conversion, which laid the foundation of a most cordial love between the apostle and him; in so much that *Paul* would have been glad to have him for his attendant, and *Onesimus* would willingly have waited upon him, in his confinement, ver. 13. But as the Christian religion makes no alteration in civil rights, and the apostle had learnt that *Onesimus* was *Philemon's* property by the laws of the country, he would not detain him; but sending him back to his master, to whom he was willing to go, wrote this letter to dispose *Philemon* to forgive former injuries, and to receive him into his family and favour again.

After a very moving and endearing salutation, 1,—3, and most affectionate expressions of joy and praise, on account of *Philemon's* steady faith in the Lord *Jesus*, and love to all the saints, and particularly to the poor among them, 4,—7, The apostle, with a most obliging address, opens the compassionate design of his letter, and throws together a variety of surprising, well adjusted, and moving topics, to recommend *Onesimus* to *Philemon's* kind regards, and engage him to accept of the return of his penitent fugitive, who would now make him a rich amends for all the misdemeanors, he had formerly been guilty of; and for whom the apostle promises to make up any loss that *Philemon* had sustained by him, 8,—22.; and then concludes, according to his custom, with salutations, and a benediction, 23,—25.

TEXT.

PAUL a prisoner of *Jesus Christ*, and *Timothy* our brother, unto *Philemon* our dearly

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL, * who is now suffering as a prisoner at *Rome*, on account of his faithful testimony to *Jesus Christ*, in preaching the gospel of salvation alone through faith in him; and the excellent *Timothy*, who,

NOTE.

* Since the apostle intended to promote a generous soul, and so to carry his point, not on the foot of authority, but than if he had begun with *Paul* the apostle of *Jesus Christ*, (which *Philemon* well knew him to be) as he usually did other epistles, where any concerned in them either denied or disputed his authority. (See the note on *Gal.* i. 1.)

more likely to work upon a compassion-

dearly beloved, and fellow-labourer,

2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house:

3 Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers.

5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

who, as a Christian and minister, is a brother in the household of faith, and in the work of the Lord, heartily join (see the note 1 Cor. i. 1.) in sending this epistle to *Philemon*, our dearly beloved brother in Christ, (ver. 7.) and fellow servant for promoting his cause and interest, according to the advantageous station in which God has placed him *; as also to the amiable *Apphia*, whom we love in the truth; (2 John ver. 1.) and to the *Colossian* minister, *Archippus*, who, having listed under the banner of the Captain of salvation, wars a good warfare, as a fellow-soldier with us, for the advancement of his kingdom and glory; and to the whole of your religious family, dear *Philemon*, which for the beauty of its discipline and order, social worship, harmony and holy conversation, is a lively image of a regular church of Christ.

3 We most affectionately unite in our earnest wishes and prayers, that the riches of divine grace, in their utmost extent, manifestations, fruits and effects, and all manner of prosperity for this world and a better, may be multiplied to all, and every one of you, (*ομν*) by the free gift of God our heavenly Father, as the original fountain; and by the mediation, merit, and communication of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the grand appointed medium of conveyance, and the procurer and dispenser of all, in the administration of his office, as mediator.

4, 5 As to yourself in particular, my compassionate good friend, *Philemon*, I am full of thanksgiving and praise, on your behalf, to my covenant-God and Father, bearing you on my heart, and mentioning you before him with great delight in my daily addresses at the throne of grace, on account of what I have had the pleasure of hearing, upon good intelligence, of the continued steadfastness, lively exercise and

N O T E.

* As to the persons saluted in these two verses, *Philemon's* being called a fellow-labourer may probably intimate, that he was engaged in the work of the ministry, but does not certainly prove it; because any that were assiduous to the apostles, though but in private stations, for helping forward the work of the Lord, were sometimes spoken of under that character, as *Aquila* and *Priscilla* were; (Rom. xvi. 3. see the paraphrase there) and they that hospitably received the servants of Christ, are called fellow-labourers (*συνεργοι*) to the truth, 3 John, ver. 8.—*Apphia* is supposed by some of the ancients to have been *Philemon's* wife; the epithet *beloved*

(*αγαπητη*) is feminine, but the *Alexandrian*, *Claremont*, and other copies add *sister*. (Vid. Mill. in loc.)—*Archippus* was a minister of the church at *Colosse*; (see the paraphrase on Col. iv. 17.) and Dr. *Lightfoot* inclined to think that he was *Philemon's* son, or at least a sojourner in his house. (Vol. I. p. 327 of his works.)—The church in *Philemon's* house seems to take in the whole of his Christian family. (See the note on Rom. xvi. 5.) And so the apostle saluted all that were dear to him, and dwelt with him, and spoke honourably and affectionately of them to ingratiate himself with them, and engage their interest with *Philemon* in favour of *Onesimus*.

and increase, and honourable profession of your faith, which you hold fast in a firm dependence on the person and offices, righteousness, grace, and government of Jesus * Christ, who is the Lord of all, and of your growing and exemplary love to all the holy professors of his name, because they visibly bear his image, belong to him, and are beloved of him.

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

6 And, in reflection on this, my earnest request to God for you is, that your sharing in the common faith may be effectual to engage you unto all further acts of generosity; and that your readiness to communicate, as the fruit of your faith, may be an effectual means of inducing all that hear of it, and especially that receive the benefit, to make the most grateful acknowledgments of all those kind and holy dispositions that are wrought and operate in you and your benevolent family (*ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς ἰσχυροὶ*) toward Jesus Christ, and his poor members and servants, for his sake, by virtue derived from him, and to his honour and glory, and the furtherance of his gospel.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

7 For 'tis an exceeding great joy and consolation to me in my bonds, as it also is to *Timothy*, (*ver. 1.*) to think of the generous expressions of your sincere love; because I am informed, that the hungry appetites and empty stomachs of the poor, whether private Christians or holy ministers, are abundantly relieved and satisfied, to the comforting of their hearts, by your charitable donations, my dear brother.

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient,

8 Encouraged therefore by your pious and compassionate temper, though, were I to insist on my apostolic authority, which I have received from Christ, and on your obligations to me his servant, (*ver. 19.*) I might, with the high tone of a father, take the freedom of commanding you to do what is proper, fit and right in the case I am going to recommend to you.

9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech

9 Yet I rather choose to wave *that* †, and, putting myself upon a level with you, as your brother in Christ,

NOTES.

* Faith manifestly refers to the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, according to the natural order in which these expressions are set, *Col. i. 4.*; and therefore here, as well as in several other places, there must be allowed a transposition of words; and so the regular position of them in this sentence is thus, *Hearing of thy faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and love towards all the saints.* "Our translators," says Mr. Blackwall in his sacred classics, Vol. I. pag. 87. "improperly retained the trans-

position, which will not be endured in *English*; but such construction is allowable in *Greek*, and used by the noblest authors."

† In what a handsome manner does the apostle just hint, and immediately drop, the consideration of his authority to command, and proceed, in the most tender and moving strain, upon the foot of love and friendship, to beseech *Philemon* to hearken to him, as to his friend, his aged friend, and prisoner in the Lord, to work upon the veneration, compassion,

seech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Christ, (*ver. 7.*) to entreat it of you, as such, by all the love, that the Lord himself, and I bear to you, and that you bear to him and his poor, and particularly to me his suffering servant; and I cannot doubt, but that your sense of the love of Christ to you, and your love to him and his members, and your compassionate and tenderly sympathizing regards to me, will move you to do what in you lies to comfort me, when you consider that I am not only *Paul*, your fast friend and brother, but your aged friend of ripe judgment, and grown old in the service of our common Lord; and am now, under the infirmities and decays of advanced years, suffering all the hardships of a prison, through the malice of my enemies, for the sake of Jesus Christ and his gospel, which I preach, and you have received.

10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

10 What I, in all love, would particularly request of you, and is the present occasion of my writing, relates to your shewing kindness to one, who, by a wonderful change wrought upon him, is become as dear to me, as though in a literal sense he were a son that had proceeded from my own bowels: (*ver. 12.*) To speak plainly, if it may be without offence, I mean *Onesimus*, your poor slave, to whom, whatsoever he was before, I am become a spiritual father, as having been instrumental, through the grace of Christ, in regenerating him by means of the word, which I have been permitted to preach in my confinement.

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

11 In this manner have I begotten him to Christ, who, as I perceive by his own penitent confession, with brokenness of heart, was formerly a worthless and injurious servant to you; but now, having passed through the new birth, is become, according to the signification of his name, a *very useful* one, and will approve himself to be diligent and faithful, to the advantage of any that may employ him, as I have found him to be to myself since his conversion. He would certainly make a very good servant now to you, were you to take him again into your house and favour;

NOTE.

compassion, and kind regards of one, whose generous soul he had just before warmed with the most pleasing sensations that arise from doing good, by reciting, with joy and praise, the great love and liberality he had shewn to all the saints! *ver. 4.—7.* And with what endearment, in the next verse, does he call *Onesimus* his son, before he so much as mentions his name; and as soon as he had mentioned it, lest *Philemon's* re-

sentment should rise too high at the very hearing it, with what fine address does he only just touch upon his former faults, and instantly pass on to the happy change that was made upon him, to carry *Philemon's* thoughts off from what had been bad, to what now was good in him; and so dispose him to attend to the apostle's request, and to all the motives he was going to advance to enforce it, in *Onesimus's* favour!

11 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him that is mine own bowels.

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel.

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;

your; and I should reckon myself very happy in his service, were he to remain with me.

12 Upon the proof I have had of him, and knowing his willingness to return and submit himself, and make all humble acknowledgments of his former crimes, and do his duty for time to come, I have sent him back again to you, with this recommendatory letter; I therefore earnestly beseech you, (*ver. 10.*) to receive him into your favour and family, for my sake, as well as for your own advantage, with the same readiness and affection, as you would any child of mine, tenderly beloved by me, as the fruit of my own body, and so a part of myself, who shall rejoice, or be grieved at heart, according to your good, or severe treatment of him.

13 For my own part, I would have gladly kept him with me, to perform all the good offices toward me, which I am satisfied, were you here, you would be willing to do for me yourself; or which, in your absence, you would wish any servant of yours should do in your stead, while I am loaded and confined with the chains, that, for preaching the gospel, are laid upon me, as a prisoner of Jesus Christ. (*ver. 9.*)

14 But how much soever I should have chosen, and been pleased with this, I consider him as your property, who have a legal right to him, and to all his best service; and therefore would not take one step this way, without your approbation and free consent, that the benefit I should receive from your servant, and consequently from yourself, might not be extorted from you, as what you could not decently refuse; but that it might be left entirely to your own choice, to do in it, just as you think best; and that whatever favour you may shew him and me, it might not proceed from any force upon your inclination; but merely from your own good-will and pleasure.

15 For, possibly, the design of Providence, in permitting his leaving you, and your losing his service for a little time, as it were but for an hour, (*περος ωραν*) was, not only that he might be brought under those means of grace, which God intended to make effectual for his conversion, who, under all the excellent opportunities he had in your eminently religious family, grew worse and worse; but also that he might be made a so much better servant, and be so ingratulated thereby to you, as might give you the greater pleasure and advantage in receiving him again, to continue with you all the days of his life, * like those

servants

NOTE.

* For ever, here, in allusion, as some suppose, to *Exod. xxi. 6.*; could be at
Vol. V. L 1 most

servants under the law, who said, *I love my master, and will not go out free*; (Ex. xxi. 5.) and even to dwell with you in heaven to all eternity.

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord?

16 You may entertain him now, not merely as a common servant or slave; but as one that is worthy of still higher respect, even as a brother in the Lord, greatly beloved of him, and of all his Christian acquaintance; and especially of me, who have been the instrument of this happy and holy change upon him, and have had the best opportunities of observing his honourable behaviour in consequence of it: But how much more still ought he now to be affectionately esteemed and valued by you, as your property, relating to the concerns of the body, and as henceforth your most loving and dutiful servant; yea, as your brother in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, and equal sharer, as such, with you, in all the privileges and blessings of Christ's family and kingdom here, and for ever hereafter?

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

17 If therefore, upon the whole, you have any value and respect for me, and count me your friend, brother, fellow-labourer, and joint heir of grace and glory, and one, that has been blessed of God to the good of your own soul; and would make me a partaker of that generous goodness, which you have been so ready to show to others, (*ver. 7.*) I beseech you not to deny my request; but receive him with the same cheerfulness and kindness, as you would my own person, who so tenderly interest myself in his case, and shall reckon your favour to him, as shewn to myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account.

18 If (as there is great reason to fear) you have sustained loss or damage, by his purloinings or embezzlements, be it to a greater or lesser degree; or if he is any way in debt to you, let not that hinder your free reception of him. Though he be not able to make any restitution, place all that to my account*; so as, in a way of legal estimation, to impute it to me, and make me answerable for it.

19 I Paul have written it with mine

19 *I Paul*, your faithful friend, engage to you, as I now do, under my own hand-writing, that (God willing)

NOTES.

most only to the end of the servant's life; nor can it be carried any further, if we suppose, with others, that the apostle referred to *beathen servants*, that were bought by the *Israelites* to be their bond-men and bond-maids for ever, *Lev. xxv. 44, 46.* But the argument is still more touching, on supposition that the apostle had a further eye to their eternally dwelling together in heaven.

* Put that on mine account, (*ῥῆσιν τοι ἁλογῶμι*) or impute it to me, expresses, and gives us a just notion of proper *imputation*, in a way of legal account; and this, with a similar verb of like signification (*λογίζομαι*) is rendered *impute*, with regard to *sin* and *righteousness*, *Rom. iv. 6, 8. 11. and v. 13.* Here then is a plain instance of the imputation of that to another, which was not his own before.

mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me: even thine ownself besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21 Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

23 There salute thee Epaphras my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;

willing) I will certainly clear off this score, and make you full satisfaction to the utmost farthing: This I will cheerfully do, notwithstanding my straitened circumstances, and your affluence; though I might insist upon it, but shall not, that, in balancing accounts, you owe me a great deal more than he can have wronged you of; even, in a way of instrumentality, the salvation of your own soul, as I was the means of bringing you to the knowledge of Christ, and faith in him for eternal life.

20 Yea, I earnestly beseech you, as a brother in sacred relation to *me*, as well as to *Onesimus*, to receive him cordially for my sake, as well as his own, not to say for yours also, and most of all for the Lord Jesus's sake, that I may rejoice in reflection upon the efficacy of his grace to engage your love and forgiveness to this poor slave, as one that you and I esteem, under the consideration of him as united to Christ by faith; let my heart be comforted now, in my bonds, with the great pleasure I shall feel in your dealing kindly with him, whom I am so touchingly concerned for, on the Lord Christ's account, in whose name I beg this favour of you.

21 The great confidence I have had in your willingness to hearken to me, and yield obedience to our Lord's commands, with respect to forgiving injuries, and receiving a disciple in the name of a disciple, (*Mat. x. 42.* and *Luke vi. 37.*) encouraged me to write to you on behalf of this poor returning fugitive; and I have a pleasing satisfaction in my own mind, that you will be ready to show him, even more favour than I have requested for him; and so I leave that matter for the present.

22 But I would further add my desire, that you would provide some proper place for me to lodge at, when I come to *Colosse*, and may have an opportunity of making a personal acknowledgment of your kindness to *Onesimus*, and me therein, and of paying what he owes you: For I trust in the Lord, that by means of, and in answer to your and other Christians prayers, (*Phil. i. 19.*) I shall, for this time, be set at liberty from my bonds, as one graciously given of God to you for your further spiritual profit, and shall have the pleasure of making you a visit to our mutual satisfaction.

23 *Epaphras*, one of your ministers, a dear fellow-servant, who is fervent in prayer, and has a great zeal for the church at *Colosse*, (*Col. i. 7.* and *iv. 12, 13.*) and is now my fellow-sufferer in prison for the cause of Christ, sends his most affectionate respects to you, (See the note on *Phil. ii. 25.*)

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers.

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

24 And so does *John Mark*, for whom I have the greatest friendship, notwithstanding some former displeasure I conceived at his having gone from me; (*Acts* xv. 37, 38.) as also *Aristarchus* the *Macedonian*, who was exposed to the utmost danger, for my sake, at *Ephesus*; (*Acts* xix. 29.) and *Demas* * and *Luke* the beloved physician, (*Col.* iv. 14.) who are my fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord,

25 May the free love and favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all its suitable and abounding manifestations, fruits and effects, be with the soul of every one of you, to guide, comfort, strengthen, and sanctify you, yet more and more, and to supply all your wants, till ye arrive at his heavenly kingdom. In testimony of my ardent desire and hope of this all-comprehensive blessing for you, I say, *Amen*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a wonderful change does sovereign grace make upon sinners, as profligate, base, and abandoned as *Onesimus* had been, who of a perfidious thief, unprofitable, lazy slave and vagrant, and runagate from his master, became a sober, diligent, useful, and faithful servant! O how easily can God over-rule even the wickedness of those for good, to whom he has a design of showing mercy! With what tender affection do the instruments of their conversion think and speak of them, as though they were the children of their own bowels! How becoming is it for those, that are their masters after the flesh, and have been injured by them, to forgive and love such penitents, as more than bare servants, even as brethren in the Lord! How happy may they think themselves in the future better services, that are to be charitably expected from them! And how worthy of imitation is the great apostle's wisdom, condescension, and engaging way of arguing, to recommend returning penitents to the favour and compassion of those that had been justly offended at them for past abuses! They are to be entreated for love's sake, with an address to their benevolent temper, and confidence in their friendship; and with the most mollifying, instead of aggravating representations of the crimes that have been committed, rather than to be over awed with authority, or deprived of their civil property, without their own free consent: They are to be reminded of the happy turn that is given to the formerly iniquitous disposition of him that is recommended to their favour; of the advantage that will accrue to themselves by complying with a request on his behalf; and of the kindness, that will be therein shown, not to say the obligation they are under, to the interceding friend, who will esteem it as done to himself, will readily undertake to repay any damages that have been suffered by purloinings, or otherwise, and will rejoice in the Lord, on account of his disposing them to manifest a forgiving spirit for his sake. With what face could any that harden themselves against such melting importunity, ever think of seeing the friend that uses it with so much earnest concern for its success; especially if he be one, to whom they, in some sense, owe their own happiness for this world, or a better? And O how amiable is the person whose faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints are displayed, in forgiving the offences of brethren, and bountifully refreshing the bowels of the poor, and in contributing, all that in him lies, to the comfort of the aged, persecuted, afflicted servants of the Lord; and whose religious family appears with all the beauty and order of a church of Christ! Such exemplary and useful professors of the gospel ought to be remembered, with thankfulness to God in prayer; and there cannot but be an exceeding pleasure

N O T E.

* This is that *Demas*, who afterwards, *ving loved this present world*, 2 *Tim.* in the apostle's second imprisonment at *iv. 10.* (See the note there.) *Rome*, forsook him in his troubles, ha-

pleasure in saluting them after a godly sort, and having a holy partnership and communion with them. Who would not wish, that every blessing of grace and peace may be multiplied to them, from the Father of mercies, through the mediation of his Son! May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with their spirits; and all that love him say, *Amen.*

A PRAC.

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION

OF THE
EPISTLE TO THE
H E B R E W S,
IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E.

THE PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THIS Epistle to the *Hebrews* is most generally supposed, and that with the greatest probability, to have been written by the apostle *Paul* before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, while he was a prisoner at *Rome* about the year of our Lord *sixty-three*; though on account of *Jewish* prejudices against him, as the apostle of the *Gentiles*, and a strenuous assertor of justification alone through faith in Christ without the deeds of the law, it may be looked upon as a point of great prudence in him, that he concealed his name, and that instead of laying the weight of his doctrine, as he usually did in other epistles, upon his apostolic authority, he began this, and all along carried on his design in it, upon the foot of the authority of the *Old Testament* scriptures, which these *Hebrews* universally owned to be of divine inspiration: And, as the *postscript* avers, it seems to have been sent by *Timothy*. (See *chap. xiii. 22, 23.*)

The most considerable evidences of the apostle *Paul's* being the author of it are, his sublime sentiments, and close, nervous, and pathetic way of reasoning, and applying things that relate to the person and offices of Christ, and to the nature, use, and design, together with the abolishment, of the *Mosaic* institutions, wherein this writer shews the most exact and extensive acquaintance with the laws of the *Jewish* church, which the apostle *Paul* had been most accurately led into by *Gamaliel's* instructions, under whom he profited in the *Jews* religion above many of his equals; (*Gal. i. 14.*) and in this epistle he speaks of his bonds, and of *Timothy* as his companion, and closes it with salutations from the Christians of *Italy*, and with his usual benediction, *Grace be with you all*, which he mentions as the token in all his epistles, *2 Thess. iii. 17, 18.* And some suppose the apostle *Peter* refers to this very epistle, when, writing to the *Hebrews*, he takes notice of what his beloved brother *Paul* had

had wrote to them, 2 *Pet.* iii. 15, 16. (See the note there.) Upon the whole, this epistle was owned to be the apostle *Paul's* by the generality of the primitive writers and councils of the first four centuries; and for many ages was universally received, as such, by the churches, as has been observed by various learned men. (See Dr. Owen's third exercitation, and Dr. *Whitby's* and Mr. *Peirce's* preface to this epistle.) I shall therefore make no scruple, in the course of the exposition, to speak of the apostle *Paul* as its author.

However, it seems that the persons to whom it was most immediately sent, knew who was the author of it, since he says to them, chap. xiii. 18, 19. *Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly: But I beseech you the rather to do this, that we may be restored to you the sooner.* And the divine authority of this epistle (which has been readily allowed by some, that have not ascribed it to the apostle *Paul*) has no dependence on our certainly knowing the name of the writer, any more than the authority of several books of the Old Testament does upon our knowing who were the penman of them.

The *Jews*, to whom this epistle was sent, seem to have been the whole body of them that had made a profession of Christ; but it was probably sent directly and immediately to those of *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, to be communicated from them to their brethren that were dispersed through various countries: And as many of them were too much attached to the *Mosaic* law, and others were in great danger of apostatizing from Christ and the gospel, through the subtilty of false teachers, and through the violent persecutions that their infidel-brethren stirred up against them; so the apostle accommodates the different parts of his epistle to their respective circumstances, and even to the conversion of such unbelievers among them, as preferred the *legal* to the *gospel*-dispensation. Accordingly his principal design is to set forth the excellency of the gospel above the law, in such a way as might direct and establish the faith of true believers in it, without any mixture of the *Mosaic* observances, and encourage them to adhere faithfully and perseveringly to it under all the difficulties and trials that attended their profession of it; as might also recommend it to the acceptance of *Jewish* unbelievers; and might awaken and convince such of their danger, as should reject, or apostatize from it.

In pursuit of this great and complicated design, he sets out with a lofty account of the dignity of Christ's *person*, who is the divine author and subject of the gospel, and superior to all the *prophets*, and even to the most exalted *angels*, by whose ministrations the law was delivered at mount *Sinai*, together with the distinguishing regard which he had shewn to the *human*, more than to the *angelic* nature, chap. i. ii. Hereupon he particularly represents Christ to be superior in office, as a *prophet*, to *Moses*; and, as a *priest*, to *Abraham* the father of the faithful, and to *Aaron* the high-priest of *Israel*, together with the efficacy and eternity of his priesthood, which was after the order of *Melchizedek*, who was a *king*, as well as a *priest*, chap. iii.—vii. Having thus established the transcendent dignity of Christ's *person* and *offices*, and that particularly in opposition to the defects

defects of the *Levitical priesthood*, he goes on to the excellency of his *offering*, beyond those that were made under the law; and of the *new covenant*, which is established upon better promises than that of mount Sinai, chap. viii. From thence he proceeds to shew the great benefit of *gospel-ordinances*, above those of the *Mosaic institution*; and of the *sacrifice* of Christ, by which these and the New Testament church are purified beyond what could be obtained by those sacrifices, by which the first tabernacle, and its various appendages of worship were dedicated to God. as prefigurative of these, chap. ix. He then goes on to *the perfection* of Christ's sacrifice to make atonement for sin, of which all the sacrifices under the law were only shadows and figures, utterly insufficient to take away sin, chap. x. Hereupon he gives a noble view of the excellency and power of *faith* in the patriarch's and holy men of old, to animate the believing *Hebrews* to perseverance in the faith of the gospel, chap. xi. And, adding to this cloud of witnesses the example of a suffering Saviour, and the consideration of the much greater excellence and duration of the *Christian*, than the *legal-dispensation*, He exhorts professing believers to *persist in the faith and holiness of the gospel*, and to take heed of *apostacy*, notwithstanding all the cruel persecutions and formidable dangers they were exposed to for their holy profession; and concludes with further exhortations to various duties, with desiring their prayers, and offering up his own for them, and with salutations and his usual benediction, chap. xii. xiii. — But in several parts of the epistle he gives himself a great liberty of enlarging upon preceding topics, and often intermingles solemn cautions, sweet encouragements, and earnest exhortations, to patience, constancy, and perseverance, suitable to the different characters of those *Jews*, into whose hands this Epistle might be supposed to come.

C H A P. I.

The apostle, to shew the excellency of the gospel of Christ above the law, and to encourage an adherence to it, introduces his great design with an account of the different manner and seasons in which, and of the persons by whom, the revelations of them respectively were made; and describes the transcendent dignity of the Son of God in his divine person, and in his creating and mediatorial work, whereby he excels all that went before him, 1.—3. And in his superiority to all the holy angels, which is proved by a comparison between him and them in various particulars, in which he has a glorious pre-eminence above them, 4.—14.

TEXT.

GOD. who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time

PARAPHRASE.

MY great design in writing this Epistle to the Jewish brethren, is to give them a just view of the great difference there is between the *Mosaic* law and the gospel of Jesus Christ, and of the vast pre-ference

past unto the fathers by the prophets,

ference of *this* dispensation to *that*; and thereby to engage them to embrace and adhere to the *latter*, as what is intended to perfect and supersede the *former*: In order hereunto, let us first of all consider that, though they were both of divine original; yet God the Father, who anciently declared his mind and will to our pious ancestors, did it not fully, nor all at once, but (*πολυμερως*) by degrees, with increasing light, in several parcels, one time after another, before the days of *Moses*; and then by him, and all along afterwards by other inspired prophets under the *Jewish* dispensation, until the spirit of prophecy ceased in the church of *Israel*; and who in divers ways communicated his word to them, as in dreams, visions, dark figures, and immediate impulses, and the like, in such a gradual manner, as left room for an expectation of still further discoveries of his mind and will in the Messiah's days, who, as the *Samaritans*, and the *Jews* themselves believed, would give the fullest and clearest revelation that ever should be made in this world to the consummation of all things. (See *John* iv. 25.)

² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

² God, I say, at the close of the *Jewish* state, and under the last dispensation of his grace, which was frequently foretold as *the latter days* and *the last times*, has now completely made known the whole system or scheme of his counsels in the gospel to us, their descendants, by a much more glorious messenger, even by his eternal, only-begotten and incarnate Son, (*John* i. 18.) who, as he, being by nature God, has an original and essential right to inherit all things; so by special constitution, agreeable to the personal union of the divine and human natures in him, God the Father ordained, and settled him in his incarnate state and office-character, as God-man Mediator, to be his *first-born*, *higher than the kings of the earth*, (Ps. lxxxix. 27.) the Lord, proprietor and possessor, ruler and disposer of all persons and things, *and head over all things to the church*; (Ephes. i. 22.) insomuch that we cannot inherit any blessing, but under him: And of this he cannot but be infinitely worthy, as the Creator of all, by whom, not as an instrument or under agent, but as a divine person, who, exerting his own power in a proper order, together with the Father, made the upper and lower worlds, and all things whatsoever, from the highest to the lowest ranks of creatures that are in them; So that *without him was not any thing made that was made*. (See the notes on ver. 10. and *John* i. 3. and *Col.* i. 16.)

³ Who being the brightness of his glory,

³ All his Father shines in him, who is originally, as a divine person, the illustrious splendor of the glory, and most exact character of the person of his

glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Father, as a son of the same nature, and essential properties with him *; and who manifestatively, as the Son of God incarnate, exhibits such an accurate, substantial, and visible representation of the Father in his infinite wisdom, power and grace, holiness and every other perfection, that, *he, who has seen the Son, has seen the Father also:* (John xiv. 9.) And as this glorious Son of God created; so he supports, maintains, and governs all ranks, orders, and individuals of his works, by his own almighty efficacious operation, which he exerts with as much ease as by speaking a word, by which he commands, and they stand fast; (*Pf. xxxiii. 9.*) and so *by him all things consist,* (*Col. i. 17.*) even by his providential influence, in whom, as well as in God the Father, *we live, and move, and have our being:* (Acts xvii. 28.) † And this Son of God being thus superlatively excellent in himself, and divinely qualified for, and worthy of the highest honour; when through the dignity of his person he, as our great High Priest, preferable to all that went before him of the order of Aaron ‡, had alone, in his own person, made an actual and

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* As no one similitude taken from creatures is sufficient to illustrate, both the essential union, and personal distinction, of the Father and Son; so, as I humbly conceive, the Son's being the *brightness of the glory* (*αυρασμα της δόξης*) of the Father, relates to his *essential* and inseparable union with the Father, as *all the fulness of the Godhead dwells* substantially in him. (See the note on *Col. ii. 9.*) And this may be called the *brightness of the Father's glory*, in allusion to the resplendent brightness of a luminous body, and particularly the sun, which is indeed nothing different from the nature of the sun itself; and his being the *express image or character* (*χαρακτερ*) of his person or subsistence (*υποστασις*) relates to his *personal* distinction from the Father, in which the Son is perfectly like him, and makes a complete representation of him, in allusion to the exact and undistorted likeness of a die and its coin, or of a seal and its impression upon wax, which exactly answers line to line. These representations cannot indeed fully express things as they are in the Divine Being; but they are the best that our narrow minds are capable of to serve the several purposes for which they are used: And the apostle's having first spoke in such strong and magnificent terms of the Son's being

the *brightness of the Father's glory*, was sufficient to guard against an imagination of a difference in nature between them, when immediately afterwards he calls him the *express image or character of the Father's person*. (See also Dr. Owen on the place.)

† By the word of his power, seems to mean by the word of his own power, by whom all things consist. But whether we refer it to his own or his Father's power it is in effect all one, since the divine power of the Father and Son is really the same in both: And if we refer it to the Father's power, this shews that the Father's making the worlds by the Son, *ver. 2.* no more denotes an inferior instrumentality of the Son in creating them, than the Son's upholding all things by the word of his Father's power denotes an inferior instrumentality of the Father's power in upholding them; but that the same divine power is exerted by each of them in both those operations.

‡ As the apostle had shewn in the two preceding verses, that Christ is more excellent than all the prophets that went before him; so he here suggests his transcendent excellency above all the *Levitical priests*, which is the grand argument of this epistle, while the prophetic and kingly offices are here and there touched

and complete atonement for our sins, to purge us from their guilt, and take them away, not by any oblation of other expiatory sacrifices, which were insufficient for it, but *by the sacrifice of himself*, (Heb. ix. 26.) He then, in consequence of this, and in the virtue of his own blood, by office-right, in correspondence to his original dignity, ascended in our nature into the holy place, even heaven itself, (*chap. ix. 12.*) to take possession, as a priest upon his throne, (*Zech. vi. 13.*) of the highest dignity and glory, which may be represented in figurative terms, after the manner of men, by his sitting with quietness and safety, pre-eminence and grandeur, at the right hand of God the Father, whose majesty and greatness are displayed with the utmost magnificence and lustre in the upper world. (See the note on *Acts vii. 55.*)

Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

4 This glorious Person, by whom God has spoken to us in these last days, infinitely surpasses, not only all the ancient prophets and priests, but also the highest angels themselves; he being in his divine nature*, and office-capacity, which is founded upon it, alike superior to them, as he really and originally is so much more excellent than all the angels in his own divine person †, and is so by the appointment and con-

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touched in the process of it; and so he speaks of Christ's *purging our sins*, which is to be understood in a sacrificial sense, as in *Lev. xvi. 30.* with respect to his taking away the guilt of sin by his expiating blood, whereby *the conscience is purged from dead works to serve the living God*, in opposition to the *blood of bulls and of goats* that was insufficient for this purpose, and only *sanctified to the purifying of the flesh.* *Chap. ix. 13, 14.*

* The apostle having begun with considering the person of Christ, both in his divine and office-character, to shew his preference to the ancient prophets and priests, *ver. 1, 3.* He keeps up the view of both those characters, in comparing Christ with the angels, to shew how far he also excels them. Accordingly some of the following quotations, to prove his superiority to the angels, relate immediately to his divine nature, and others to his mediatorial office, which is founded upon it, and could not be discharged, and rendered effectual without it; and altogether, in one or the other, and unitedly in both those considerations of him, are an uncontrollable and illustrious evidence of the superlative dignity of the person of Christ above the most exalted angels. And it was highly proper to de-

monstrate his pre-eminence above them; because the *Jews* insisted on, and boasted of the excellency of their law, as it was delivered by the ministration of angels according to what is said about it, *chap. ii. 2.* compared with *Deut. xxxiii. 2.* *Psal. lxxviii. 17.* *Acts vii. 53.* and *Gal. iii. 19.* And though, as I apprehend, Christ was the *Yehovah* that delivered the law by the disposition of angels, which gave a divine authority to it; yet the gospel appears to be still more glorious, and the neglect of it is spoken of as to be still more dreaded, *chap. ii. 2, 3;* because God spoke it to us, not by the ministry of angels as he did the law, but immediately in and by the ministry of his own incarnate Son: For the stress of the argument lies, not in any difference as to the divine authority of the original author of one and the other, which is the same, whether it were God the Father, or God the Son, that delivered the law at mount *Sinai* by the ministration of angels; but it lies in the vastly superior excellency of the Son as the immediately ministering person by whom the gospel is spoken to us.

† The word (*γεννητος*) here translated *made*, very often signifies, and is rendered *is*; and so it expresses what Christ really

stitution of the Father, as God-man Mediator; and is manifested to be as much above them in his state of exaltation, as is answerable to that more glorious, emphatical, and significant title, which he is honoured with by the Father himself, (*ver. 5.*) and which he has received by right of inheritance, as the natural and appointed heir of all things; (see the paraphrase on *ver. 2.*) a title far more excellent, than any name that belongs, or ever was given with such peculiarity and eminence, to any, even of the highest angels. The special name or title which I mean, and which is expressive of the dignity of his person, and appropriated to him, is that of the *Son of God*.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? and again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

5 For, to consider this matter first with respect to his *divine nature*, to which of the angelic spirits, even of the highest order and dignity amongst them, did God ever speak with an emphasis and peculiarity, as he did to our Lord Jesus Christ; when, referring to the formal reason of his Sonship, he said to him, (*Pf. ii. 7.*) Thou art my essential Son, whom I have begotten from eternity; which, for unalterable permanency of duration, may be called one continued unsucceffive day *. And again, with respect to his *office-capacity*, correspondent to his original Sonship,

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really is, and may respect his being originally in himself more excellent than the angels; at other times it signifies *manifested to be*, as it might be rendered in *Matth. v. 45.* and *John xv. 8.*; and so Christ's being more excellent than the angels, may relate to the *evidence* and *demonstration* with which God manifests or declares him to be so: And at other times it signifies *made or ordained*, as in *Mark ii. 27.*; and so Christ's being made more excellent than the angels, may refer to the office-exaltation of his incarnate person, after he had, in his state of humiliation been made lower than the angels.

* In the former part of this verse God the Father speaks of what he had already done in begetting his Son; but, in this last clause he speaks of what he would be to him. Accordingly I take the former of these to relate to his *natural Sonship* by an eternal inconceivable generation, which was manifested by his resurrection; (see the note on *chap. v. 8.*) and the second to his Father's *acknowledgment and treatment* of him as his *incarnate Son and Mediator*: And so the argument for the superior dignity of his person proceeds in this verse from his divine to his office-character, and from

thence to both these considerations of him jointly, *ver. 6.*—*9.*; and it winds up with a strong proof of his being indeed the great, eternal, and unchangeable God, that made the earth and the heavens, and will remain the same after they shall all perish, *ver. 10.*—*12.* (See the note there.) Mr. *Peirce* in his note upon the last quotation in this verse has, I think, abundantly proved by several arguments, that it is taken from the prophecy in *2 Sam. vii. 14.* and *1 Chron. xvii. 13.* where the words are exactly the same. The only difficulty that seems to lie against this interpretation, is what follows *2 Sam. vii. 14.* where it is added, *If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men*, which is by no means applicable to Christ himself. But that learned writer sufficiently answers this, by showing that, according to the meaning and frequent use of the relative term, (*WHICH*) even where the demonstrative pronoun before it is omitted, it ought to be rendered *whosoever*, meaning whosoever of the *Messiah's children* commit iniquity, *I will chasten him*, &c.; and thus this very prophecy is commented upon in *Psal. lxxxix. 30.*—*33.*

Of which of the angels has God the Father said, as he did of Christ in another prophecy of him, (2 Sam. vii. 14. and 1 Chron. xvii. 13.) I will own myself to be his Father, and him to be my Son, by an extraordinary conception and birth in human nature, and will treat him accordingly, with eminent tokens of my peculiar love, protection, and care of him, whom I will exalt to his kingdom? (See 1 Chron. xvii. 14. and Luke i. 32, 33.)

6 And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

6 And again, to show that he is in reality a divine Saviour, infinitely more excellent than the highest angels, we have another testimony to him in *Pf. xcvi. 7.**; where, with reference to God's introducing this Lord and heir of all into our world at his miraculous birth of a virgin, in order to his going through the work of mediation upon earth, and his consequent exaltation to the throne of his glory in heaven, and his coming to judge the world at the last day, God the Father commanded even all his holy angels themselves to offer religious adoration to him, as to his own incarnate Son, and to pay all divine honours to him, as such; which supposes him to be God their Creator; and them to be the work of his hands, otherwise they would never have been ordered to pay such homage to him, as is the unalienable right of Deity. (See *Mat. iv. 10.*)

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels

7 And still further to show how much the angels are beneath him, God, speaking concerning them, says, He makes those noblest of all his creatures, even

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* And again, seems not to relate to God's bringing Christ into the world again at his resurrection, as some suppose: For the word (*οὐρανίου*) here rendered *the world*, when put absolutely without any other addition, constantly relates to this habitable earth or world, as Dr. Owen observes; or to some part of it, such as the land of Judea, or the Roman empire: But the resurrection of Christ was rather in order to his leaving this world, and going to the Father, (John xvi. 28.) than to his being brought again into this world, from which his body was never removed, and in which he never afterwards appeared, except to his own disciples. Again, therefore, by a usual transposition or transposing of the Greek sentence, may rather be joined to *he says*, as our version has put it; and so it bears the same sense, and is taken in the same way, as in the foregoing verse, to lead us on to another testimony concerning Christ, relating to the time when he was brought into our world, in order

to his erecting a kingdom of grace in it, and being advanced to the throne of his glory, as head over all things to the church; and so God's bringing him into the world includes his incarnation, and all that followed upon it in his life, death, resurrection, exaltation, and effusion of his Spirit, for the setting up of his throne and kingdom in this lower world, and exercising dominion over all, till he shall come to judgment. Accordingly *Psal. xcvi. 7.* from whence these words are quoted, begins *ver. 1.* with calling upon the earth, and the multitude of isles to rejoice on account of his reigning, who is here called the first-begotten, and in *Psal. lxxxix. 27.* the first-born, higher than the kings of the earth, though none were so begotten or born afterwards, to intimate his pre-eminence, and that there was none before him, in allusion to the dignity of the first-born under the law, who was so called, whether any were born after him or not.

angels spirits; and
his ministers a
flame of fire.

even those spiritual and intellectual beings * the angels themselves, his servants to execute his will and commandments with strength, speed, and activity like the winds; and makes those, his ministering spirits, fervent, powerful, and penetrating in their agency, like the very lightning, or any flame of fire.

§ But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

8 But in much loftier strains of language, God in the scripture says to his only begotten and eternal Son, (*Psal. xlv. 6, 7.*) As, O thou truly divine person †, thy natural and essential dominion, which is emblematically represented by a prince's sitting on his throne, is everlastingly and unchangeably the same, without beginning or end ‡; So thy mediatorial throne of government shall remain, 'till all its ends be thoroughly accomplished; and the honour of it, together with the complete happiness of thy subjects, shall abide for ever and ever, even after the manner of administering thy kingdom on earth shall cease, and thou shalt have delivered it up to the Father, that according to the original state of things God, inclusive of all the divine persons, may be all in all that farther pertains to it. (See the note on *1 Cor. xv. 24.—28.*) The rule which thou bearest in thy kingdom is full of equity, truth, and holiness, that run through all thy laws and government: Thou art intitled to this government upon principles of righteousness; and thy reign, of which a sceptre is the royal ensign, is in all rectitude, and with sanctifying influence over righteous subjects.

§ Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, when thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

9 Yea, such is thy regal dignity, and thy worthiness of it, that not only thy laws and administrations, but thy heart and nature are infinitely pure and holy: Thou hast the greatest delight in holiness, and hast thyself fulfilled all righteousness; and thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity without the utmost detestation of it, and hast taken away its guilt from thy

NOTES.

* It is plain that *Psal. civ. 4.* from whence this quotation is made, speaks, as it is here rendered of, and not to the angels; and though the word in the Greek (*αγγελοι*) most commonly signifies to; yet it is sometimes used for of or concerning, as it might be rendered in *Mark xii. 12.* and *Rom. x. 21.* And as spirits (*πνευματα*) signify also winds, it seems most natural to suppose, that the angels in the first clause, are compared to the winds, as they are in the next to a flame of fire; and since the apostle designed to show the preference of Christ to the angels in their ministration of the law, *chap. ii. 2, 3.* perhaps here may be some reference to their agency in forming the

terrible thunders, lightnings, and tempest at Mount Sinai, which are spoken of in *Exod. xix. 16.* and *Heb. xii. 18.*

† O God (*ο Θεος*) in the singular number is never used absolutely, or without a restriction to some peculiar consideration of it, as it is here, of any but the only true God.

‡ Though I take Christ's mediatorial throne to be most immediately intended in this passage; yet as this is founded upon, and corresponds to his original dominion as God, and he had been spoken of in his divine and mediatorial characters in the preceding verses, I thought proper to keep that in view, which in the strictest sense is for ever and ever.

thy subjects by thy atoning blood, that thou mightest subdue its power in them by thy Spirit and grace. On account of all this, God, who prepared thee a body, and is thy covenant God, and has entered into engagements with thee as God-man Mediator, and so in thy office-capacity is thy God, he has inaugurated and actually invested thee with all fulness of authority, in exalting thee *with his right hand* to be a *Prince and a Saviour*; (*Acts* v. 31.) and has enriched thee with an unmeasurable fulness of the Spirit, that thou mightest give gifts to men, and shed them forth abundantly; (*Eph.* iv. 8. and *Acts* ii. 33.) which, in allusion to the ancient modes of consecrating prophets, priests, and kings, may be expressed by his anointing thee with such an unction as is infinitely delightful to thee, and produces the most joyful effects upon thy subjects, even an unction far more excellent and abundant, than ever was or will be given to any other, whether prophet, priest, or king, or saint, or angel, which in their measure have been, are, or shall be respectively partakers (*μετοχου*) of offices, blessings, and joys with thee, and under thee.

10 And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

10 And to show that Christ is above all *regular* gods, and had an original right to universal dominion, antecedent to what is now given him, in his complex person and office-character, by special dispensation*. It is further said of the Son, (*Psal.* cii. 25, 26, 27.) Thou, Jehovah, in the beginning, before any creatures

N O T E.

* The word *and* is the apostle's own, for connecting this with the foregoing testimony, it not being in *Psal.* cii. 25. from whence this passage is quoted; and the form of address is just the same all along through both these recited testimonies, without the least intimation or appearance of a different person's being introduced in the application of them, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, &c. And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, &c.* Were we to suppose, with some, that this last testimony refers not to God the Son, but to the Father, I own that, after all I have met with to support this opinion, I cannot see to what purpose this passage is mentioned at all, or how it any way suits the design of the argument in hand: But as it is an unquestionably just description of the only true God in creating work, it is very properly brought in here as applicable to Christ, to prevent all cavils, as though he were to be considered only as an un-

der agent, when it was said *ver. 2.* that *all things were made by him*; and so it is much to the apostle's purpose to prove the Son's original right of dominion, as Lord of all, because *he made the worlds*, *ver. 3.*; as also to shew that he is every way in *nature*, as well as *office*, far more excellent than the angels and all creatures whatsoever; and that the creation of the world was to be ascribed to him, who is the author of the gospel; and not at all to the angels, by whose ministrations the law was given, as though they were employed in creating work, according to the fond imagination of some of the *Jews*: And that *Psal.* cii. from whence this citation is made, relates to the *Messiah*, appears from several verses in it, as particularly from *ver. 13, 15, 16, 18, 22.*; and therefore this grand description of God, as eternal and unchangeable, and as the creator of all, may well be supposed to belong to the person of Christ, as the apostle has here applied it.

tures existed, which of old were not in being, didst set fast the earth, as on its basis, that it might not be removed out of its place: And all the beauties, glories, and furniture of the whole fabric of the heavens, with all their pompous hosts of sun, moon, and stars, are the curious workmanship of thy infinite wisdom and almighty power.

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

11 Both the earth and the heavens, and all the parts of this visible creation, firm and durable as some of them now appear to be, are of a corruptible nature, and in their season shall certainly pass away, and be totally dissolved, as to their present use and form: (*Mat. v. 18. and 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, —13.*) But thou, O immortal Son of God! always hadst, still hast, and wilt have an abiding and unchangeable existence. *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God,* as is said of the great Jehovah of Israel: (*Psal. xc. 2.*) And as we daily see that all the creatures of this lower world grow old and gradually decay; so the earth and the heavens, with all the visible things contained in them, shall wear out, and, at length, become unfit to answer their present design, like an old rotten garment.

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

12 And as a garment is easily put off, folded up and laid aside at a man's pleasure, when it is no further serviceable, and he has either done with it, or designs to turn it to a new use; So Thou, the Creator of all, wilt, by thine omnipotence, at the end of time, as easily *roll the heavens together as a scroll, and move every mountain and island out of their places:* (*Is. xxxiv. 4. and Rev. vi. 14.*) And by thy almighty power thou wilt make such a wonderful alteration in them, that, instead of being annihilated and utterly destroyed, they shall be changed into *new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness,* (*2 Pet. iii. 13.*) when thou wilt unfold them again for the still greater glory of thy name. But thou thyself art eternally and invariably the same in thy being and perfections, *without beginning of days or end of life:* And in thy love and care of thy people, and the efficacy of thy mediation, *Thou art the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* (*Heb. vii. 3. and xiii. 8.*)

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

13 But which of the angels can once be compared with this glorious Saviour in his infinite dignity, as *that* appears from what has been observed about his divine nature and office-exaltation? Which of them, even of the highest of these excellent spirits, has God the Father thought worthy of so transcendent an honour, as ever to lay to any one of them, as he did to his incarnate Son, (*Pf. cx. 2.*) Sit thou enthroned in majesty,

majesty, power and glory, at my right hand, and continue thou to reign on thy mediatorial throne, till sin, Satan, death, and all thine and thy churches enemies be actually and absolutely subdued, and till thou triumph over them, like vanquished rebels under thy feet, according to my appointment?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

14 On the contrary, Are not all these spiritual beings placed in an infinitely lower rank, (*Pf. ciii. 21.*) even the most eminent of them, as but messengers and servants of Christ, whom he commissions and employs merely in a ministerial way, as formerly in delivering the law at mount Sinai, so continually still in offices of protection, care, and kindness, and in many important services in life and death, for the benefit of those that, by inheritance through grace, are appointed to, and (*μυλλοντας κληρονομειν*) shall actually inherit eternal life under him, and in his right, who is their head, and the prime heir of all things? (*ver. 2.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what satisfaction may we depend upon the divine authority of both the Old and New Testament! God, who formerly spake to the fathers by the prophets, now speaks to us by his Son; he began and gradually carried on various revelations at different times, in distinct parcels, and by several ways and means, which we have an account of in the Old Testament, till he completed them in the New. How thankful should we be that our lot is cast under the gospel-dispensation! This is the clearest, the fullest, the best, and last discovery of the mind and will of God, that is to be expected in our world. And how glorious is the representation it gives us of Christ in his divine nature and mediatorial office! He is essentially the same God with the Father, and yet *personally* distinct from him, as the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and is his eternal only begotten Son; he is the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things contained therein, and upholds them by the word of his power: And in his office-capacity he is the appointed heir of all things, in and by whom we inherit the blessings of grace and glory. It is he, and he only, that has taken away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and is now exalted on his throne, with the highest dignity and honour, at the Father's right hand; his throne is for ever and ever! He is infinitely pure and spotless in himself, and righteous in all the administrations of his kingdom; he is fully invested with all authority above whatever was or shall be conferred on any prophet, priest or king, saint or angel; and at the last day, he, who is the unchangeable God, will put an end to the present frame of this world, and change it into another, that will be incomparably more excellent and glorious. How safe and happy then are the saints under his care! And what an honour has he put upon them, in assuming their nature, and exalting it in union with his own divine person in heaven, and in ordering all the holy angels to minister to them! O, with what solemnity and joy should they join with these celestial spirits in paying all religious adorations to him! And how dead should their hearts be to this perishing world and all its concerns, which wax old, and shall be laid aside like a useless worn-out garment! But, after all the changes of the present scene of things, they themselves shall inherit eternal salvation with him.

C H A P. II.

The apostle infers from what he had said about the dignity of Christ's person and office, the duty of stedfastly adhering to him and his gospel, 1,—4. Re-assumes his argument about Christ's pre-eminence above the angels, and shews that his sufferings are no objection against it, 5,—9. Opens the ground and reason of his sufferings, and the fitness of that dispensation, which laid out his way through them to his mediatorial glory, 10,—13. And leads us to the incarnation of Christ, in opposition to his assuming the nature of angels, as necessary to the discharge of his priestly office, 14,—18.

TEXT.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

PARAPHRASE.

SINCE therefore Christ is such an excellent and divine person, so far superior to all preceding prophets, and even to the angels themselves, as has now been proved; (*chap. i.*) * It, for this reason, (*diuturno*) highly concerns us, in point of duty and interest, even all and every one of us, that live under this more eminently glorious dispensation, than that delivered by *Moses* and by the ministration of angels, to attend the more diligently, affectionately and stedfastly unto; and, with humble reverential faith and love, to esteem, embrace, meditate, and reflect upon, and seriously endeavour to make a suitable use and improvement of, the great and interesting doctrines, which under the gospel-state we have heard, as delivered to us in the ministry of the word; and to retain them carefully in our hearts and memories, and persevere in our holy profession of them; lest, in some season and circumstances of life, through the corruption heedlessness, treachery, and prejudices of our hearts, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this evil world, or through any other means, we should be carried away from the truth, or be forgetful hearers of the word, and suffer it to slip out of our minds, like water that runs out of a leaking vessel †; or should suffer it to pass by us, as a stream, without making any good use of it; and so lose the benefit of the gospel, and perish under all its gracious ministrations.

2 For

NOTE.

* In this and the three following verses the apostle manifestly makes a practical application of the foregoing discourse, by way of inference from it, as appears by the particle *therefore*, with which he introduces it; and such digressions are very frequent in several other parts of this epistle, as we shall see in their course.

† Lest we should let them slip, or, as

the margin renders it, (*εναγχευομαι*) *run out*, is a beautiful allusion to *leaking vessels*, with which our treacherous hearts and memories may well be compared; or, perhaps, it may allude to waters that flow by us, but are made no use of; and in either of these views it may import defects in ourselves, through which we get no saving advantage by the gospel.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

2 For if *Moses'* law, which was given at mount *Sinai* by the ministration of angels, as Christ's messengers and servants to publish it, (*Act. vii. 38, 53.* see the paraphrase there) was (*Strong's*) firm and valid, as established by divine authority, with an awful sanction to enforce it; and if every contemptuous violation of any precept of that law, by a sin of omission or commission; and every act of wilful disobedience to the authority of God in it, were severely punished upon the transgressor, who died without mercy, as the righteous retribution of his evil deeds.

3 How then is it possible that any of us, who have heard the gospel, should escape the dreadful wrath of God? How can we in our consciences expect to avoid condemnation, or imagine that his justice will excuse or spare us, or forbear executing the heaviest vengeance upon us, and *that* without mercy or remedy, for all our iniquities; and especially for our refusals and abuses of his grace, and of the only way of pardon and eternal life through Jesus Christ; if, through unbelief or carelessness, we despise and reject, or disregard and do not embrace the word of salvation, (*Act. xiii. 26.* and *Ephes. i. 13.*) or the gospel, which brings salvation to lost sinners, (*Tit. ii. 11.*) as it displays its reality, nature, and excellency, shews us the way, and is the means of obtaining it, and is *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes?* (*Rom. i. 16.*) A salvation, not of a temporal and worldly, but of a spiritual, heavenly, and eternal nature; a salvation which is the contrivance of such amazing counsels of wisdom and grace, and is procured by so great a price, and consists of deliverance from so great sin and misery, and of advancement to so great holiness, happiness, and glory; and a salvation so complete and wonderfully comprehensive of all blessings, answerable to our utmost wants and desires, as surpasses all comprehension, thought, or expression; The first clear publication of which, without the veil of types and shadows*, was begun to be made personally and immediately by the Lord Jesus Christ himself in the days of his ministry upon earth,

N n 2

N O T E.

* It is with great propriety that the apostle says, *which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord*: For though Christ opened the gospel-dispensation in his personal ministry, he did not preach the whole of it; because several things pertaining to it were to be accomplished by his death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and were not proper to be fully revealed; nor could they be spo-

ken of as actually subsisting, nor be well received, till he went to the Father, and shed down his Spirit from on high: Accordingly he said to his disciples, *John xvi. 12, 13. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.*

earth, who is the Son of God, and the Lord of angels; and was further carried on, and certified to us of the *Jewish* nation, by many honest, undesigning, faithful witnesses, and *that* under divine inspiration, such as the evangelists, apostles, and others, who themselves heard him deliver these blessed tidings of so great salvation, which he came to procure, and bestow upon them that should believe in him.

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

4 To assure us of the infallible certainty of their witness, God himself also gave the most unquestionable testimony to their integrity, and to the truth of what they said, in an extraordinary manner, by abundance of miraculous operations and effects, which he wrought by them; operations which may be called *signs**, as they were signals of his owning and being with them, and were seals of the doctrine they preached; and may be called *wonders*, as they were uncommon and amazing appearances of God's almighty power and goodness; and may truly be called various kinds of *miracles*, as they were wrought by a divine agency, beyond, and even contrary to the ordinary course of nature; such as healing the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead, merely by speaking a word: And God still further bore witness to these his faithful servants, and confirmed their testimony, in a rich variety of supernatural gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as the gifts of prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, and utterance; and the gift of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues; yea, and the gift of conveying these excellent endowments to other believers, as has frequently been done by the laying on of the apostle's hands: All which miraculous attestations from God are not only equal to, but far more excellent than those, that he shewed in confirmation of the law of *Moses*; (Deut. vi. 22.) and are distributed in all their different kinds and degrees to one and another of these witnesses, and to every one that has any of them, according to the good pleasure and sovereign operation of God by his Spirit, who, with the same divine sovereignty, *divides them to every man severally, as he will.* (1 Cor. xii. 11.)

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

5 But to return to the comparison between Christ and the holy angels, This glorious Person, I say, is far superior in his *office-character*, as well as in *himself*, to any of them: For how much soever they were

NOTE

* *Signs, wonders, and miracles*, seem to be much of the same import; but may be expressed under those several terms for reasons suggested in the paraphrase, which gives us a different view

of what we more generally call *miracles*, even while we distinguish them from what are commonly called the *gifts of the Spirit*.

were employed in giving the law, (*ver. 2.*) or are made use of as ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, (*chap. i. 14.*) God has not given them any authority or dominion over the New Testament-church, and the things belonging to it; which, being to succeed the *Mosaic* dispensation, were commonly styled by the Jew, *the world to come*. God has no where spoke of bringing the gospel-church into any subjection to the angels, as if they were to be lords and rulers over it, or as if its doctrines, ordinances and institutions, privileges and blessings, were to be derived from them, or they were to publish and dispense its affairs; which are the things that I am speaking of, and shall further insist upon in this Epistle, as more excellent than any that ever went before them.

6 But one in a certain place retained, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?

6 But all these things are owing to, and immediately depend upon the incarnate Son of God himself, of whom an inspired writer of the Old Testament speaks in a certain paragraph, (*Pf. viii. 4, 5, 6.*) where, contemplating the magnificent works of God, he broke out into this rapturous and admiring exclamation, saying, How mean and inconsiderable a creature is man in himself, and compared with the vast expanse of the heavens, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained *, that thou shouldst condescend to

N O T E.

* The *eighth psalm*, from whence this and the two following verses are quoted, seems to have been composed by David in a clear, moon shining and star-light night, when he was contemplating the wonderful fabric of the heavens; because in his magnificent description of its luminaries, he takes no notice of *the sun*, the most glorious of them all: And it appears to me that the words here cited had a principal and ultimate reference to the *Messiah*, who is really a man, and is spoken of as man, and characterized as *the Son of man*, in the *Psalms* and other parts of the Old Testament, (*Psal. lxxx. 17. Dan. vii. 13. Zech. vi. 12. and xiii. 7.*) as well as is called the *man Christ Jesus*, in the New Testament, *1 Tim. ii. 5.* and often spoke of himself, as *the Son of man*: For if the following words in *Psal. viii.* were directly and confinedly meant of the *first Adam*, or of his posterity in general, the order of them would most naturally have been, *he was crowned with glory and honour, and made a little lower than the angels*, since his honour was before his fall and abasement; and as the words (*Gen. xiv. 7.*) *a little lower*, *ver. 7.* might, I

think, be better rendered, as they are in the margin, and *Acts v. 34.* *a little while*, or *for a little space*, it should rather have been said, if applied to Adam, that he was *a little while crowned with glory and honour*, than that he was *a little while made lower than the angels*; since his glory and honour was only for a small space of time before his fall, and his being made lower than the angels was continued all along after it. But as Christ was made not *a little only*, but *much lower*, than the angels for *a few years*, as to his state and condition in the days of his humiliation upon earth; so he is now crowned with glory and honour to continue in his exalted state for ever: And how applicable soever some of the quoted passages, relating to *dominion*, might be to Adam and his posterity in general: yet in their complete and highest sense, they could belong to none but the *second Adam*, as the universal Lord and Governor of all his creatures, and the triumphant Conqueror of all his enemies; nor would the apostle's quotation of them have been at all to his purpose, unless he had understood them to have been spoken of Christ.

to shew such favour to him, as to dignify his nature in the incarnation of thy Son? Or what is the nature of man, considered merely as such, in the Messiah himself, whose distinguishing character is the *Son of man*, that thou shouldst, for the sake of mankind, raise him in human nature to the office of mediation, and enrich him with thy gifts and graces, and assist and own him in his work, and exalt him to his throne and kingdom, and give him Power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him; (John xvii. 2.) and so by him shouldst visit the human race with such tender mercy, as to redeem thy people, and raise him up, as an horn of salvation for them in the house of thy servant David. (Luke i. 68, 69.)

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

7 Thou, in pursuit of this gracious and glorious design, didst place this Son of man, for a small season in a state of deep humiliation, subject to miseries in soul and body, and to death itself, whereby, under thy forsakings, his condition was abundantly inferior to that of the holy angels, who *always behold thy face in heaven*, (Mat. xviii. 10.) and never die: (Luke xx. 36.) And when he had gone through a short course of humiliation, obedience, and sufferings, even unto the most ignominious and painful death upon earth, Thou in consequence of it, and in recompence for it, didst raise him from the dead, and advance him like a king to his throne, and solemnly inaugurate and invest him, like a prince at his coronation, in all mediatorial dignity and authority, honour and glory, at thine own right-hand in the highest heavens; (Phil. ii. 8. 9.) and didst constitute him the absolute and universal Lord and Sovereign of all the creatures which thou hast made, (Ephes. i. 21. and 1 Pet. iii. 22.) that he might govern and order, overrule and restrain them, and make them subserve the great designs of his kingdom, as *the head over all things to the church*. (Ephes. i. 22.)

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him:

8 Thou hast subjected all thy works, from the highest to the lowest of them, to his dominion, that they may be entirely at his disposal; and hast given him an absolute power over all his and his church's enemies, sin, Satan, and death, that he may conquer, subdue and triumph over them, like slaves and captives under his feet; may disarm them of all their force; may trample upon them with indignation and contempt, like the dirt under his feet; and may execute his righteous wrath upon them*.—This testimony of the *Psalms* shews

NOTE.

* Here ends the apostle's quotation from the *Psalms*, and what follows is his own arguing upon it.

shews that he had a higher view, than to that original dominion, which was given to man over the creatures of this lower world: For (as is there said *absolutely* and *universally*) when God put all things whatsoever, without exception or limitation, under him, it is evident, that there is no work of his hands, no creature in heaven or earth, nor any affair relating to them, nor consequently to the gospel church, that is not brought into subjection to him. But we plainly see, by observation and experience, that in so long a time, as from the creation of the world to this very day, neither mankind in general, nor any one of them in particular, has an absolute and universal dominion over all things; and therefore these words, *Thou hast put all things in subjection under him*, cannot be applied in their full extent to *Adam*, or any of his natural descendents*: And, notwithstanding that full grant of authority and dominion, which is made to *our Lord Jesus* himself, It must indeed be allowed, that we as yet do not see that, in *fact*, all things are actually so reduced under him, as to have put an end to all the opposition of his and his people's enemies; the time for this being not yet come.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

9 But (which cannot be said of any other man) we certainly know from the testimonies of inspired writers, whom God bore witness to, by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, (*ver. 4.*) and by the great and wonderful effects of their doctrine upon the hearts and lives of innumerable converts from among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, thro' the attending power of the Spirit, which is shed down abundantly from the exalted Saviour; and we see by faith that the Lord Jesus, who for a little while, (see the note on *ver. 6.*) during the few years of his incarnation upon earth, was placed in a condition far inferior to the holy angels, that he might undergo the most terrible and abasing sufferings, even unto death; we are well assured, I say, that now in his human nature, as the reward of his sufferings and death, he is actually exalted to his heavenly throne, and is there incircled with the highest honours, and possessed of all the majesty and glory, dignity,

NOTES.

* Dr. Owen and others understand this *him* to relate to *man in general*, in distinction from *Jesus*, who is mentioned, as they apprehend, in opposition to this *him* at the beginning of the next verse; and so the apostle denies that all things are put under him: But *Beza*, *Piscator*, *Mr. Pierce* and others understand this *him* as relating to *Christ*; and so the last clause of this verse may be considered as an *objection* against his absolute and unlimited dominion, which is answered in the next verse, as seems to be intimated by the word *yet*, (*oura*) *We see not yet all things put under him*, which implies that the time is coming when they shall be so. Now, though I incline most to this *last* sense, I would not be peremptory in it; and therefore have included both.

dignity, authority, and power of his mediatorial kingdom, in which he must reign till all his enemies be effectually subdued under his feet. (1 Cor. xv. 25.) And as by the gracious appointment of God, in his infinite love and good-will to men, Christ tasted the bitter cup of death*, by actually dying in the room and stead of every one of the *many sons* (ver. 10.) that belong to him, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and by experimentally knowing the sorrows of that tremendous death, which their sins deserved; so he, having done this, is exalted to all the honours of his throne, that he might be in full capacity to pursue and accomplish the great end of his death, in bringing them all safe to glory.

to For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

10. For how offensive soever the doctrine of a suffering Messiah be to the carnal *Jews*, who looked for a temporal, and not a spiritual salvation by him; It was every way right and fit, decent, decorous, and agreeable to the justice and holiness, wisdom and goodness, and indeed to all the perfections of God, who is the ultimate end, *for whom*, and the first cause, *by whom*, all things whatsoever were created, and the whole scheme of salvation was formed: It was, I say, infinitely becoming the great God himself, for the vindication of the rights and honour of his holy nature, law, and government, in his way of bringing an innumerable multitude (Rev. vii. 9.) of adopted and regenerated sons to all the blessedness and glory of the heavenly state, to prepare his only begotten Son for this work, as the prince, leader, and author of eternal salvation†, the whole accomplishment of which

N O T E S.

* *Tasting death*, is an *Hebraism* for *dying*: But the death of Christ was not after he was crowned with glory and honour, much less was he crowned, that he might taste death, as the order of these words may seem to intimate; for the scripture every where speaks of his death as preceding his exaltation. And therefore it is most consonant to the truth, and to the apostle's design, to understand, with Mr. Peirce, that here is such an *ellipsis* or *synchysis*, as is to be met with both in profane and sacred writers, and is a figure of speech that supplies the sense, though not exactly according to the structure of the words; and so it may stand thus, *Jesus was crowned with glory and honour, that, by the grace of God having tasted death, he might save every man*.—But that learned writer (notwithstanding his notion of universal redemption) further ob-

serves, that *every man*, for whom Christ tasted death, cannot be here meant of *all mankind*; but that the nature of the argument and the scope of the context manifestly carry it under a limitation to all those who were before called the *heirs of salvation*, chap. i. 14. and are all along, after the verse before us, called, *the many sons* who were to be brought to glory, the *sanctified*, *Christ's brethren*, and the *church*; and we may add, *the children* which God had given him, ver. 10.—14. It also might be designed to show that this favour was not intended to be confined to the *Jews*, but to be extended likewise to the *Gentiles*.

† *The Captain of salvation* (ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας) properly signifies the *Leader*, and is rendered *the Prince*, and the *Author*, (Acts iii. 15. and v. 31. and Heb. xii. 2.) which are the only places besides in the New Testament, where this

which is lodged in his hands, and to perfect the consecration of him to his office, as a priest upon his throne, by means of his atoning sufferings and death on their behalf, and in their stead, that *as sin has reigned unto death, so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Rom. v. 21.)

11 For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

11 For both *the Redeemer*, who has taken away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that its guilt may be expiated and its defilement removed, * and *the redeemed*, whose sins are purged away by his blood and spirit, and who are thereby devoted to God, and qualified for acceptably worshipping and serving him, are all of *one blood*, (Acts xvii. 26.) partakers of one and the same human nature from one common parent; Christ having assumed their nature into personal union with himself, and *that* in the same state and condition of weakness, affliction, and mortality with themselves, sin only excepted, (*ver.* 17. and *chap.* iv. 15.) that he might have something to offer, and they might have the benefit of it †; and they are all of *one heavenly Father*, under a wise, holy, and gracious constitution, whereby they are *legally one* and included in *one covenant*. And therefore, great and glorious as Christ is, and mean and contemptible as they are, he does not disdain, but condescends to take them into the near and endearing relation of brethren to himself, who is *the first born among many brethren*, (Rom. viii. 29.) and to own them with pleasure

NOTES.

this term is used; and in all these places it is applied to *Christ*: And this Captain of salvation being *made perfect*, according to different acceptations of the word, (ἐπισυναι) which is sometimes rendered to *perfect*, (*chap.* vii. 19. and ix. 9.) and at others to *consecrate*, (*chap.* vii. 28.) may relate to his being both completely fitted for, and consecrated to that part of his office which he was to carry on in heaven, and for the fulfilling of which he was crowned with the glory and honour mentioned in the preceding verse.

* Sanctifieth and sanctified (ο ἀγιαζων, ο ἀγιασμενος) are, I think, constantly used through this epistle in the *sacrificial* sense, with a reference to legal purifications for *separation*, or *dedication* to God, and being fitted for his service; or for cleansing from the guilt of sin: But when they relate to the sanctification of *believers*, in virtue of the blood of Christ, as they do here, and in *chap.* x. 10. 14. they may well be supposed to include also an *internal work of holiness*, which

was signified by external purifications with water and blood, (according to the more common acceptation of those words in other epistles) as it was purchased by the blood of Christ, and is effected in consequence thereof by the sanctification of the Spirit

† Of *one* (ἐξ ἑνός) is both the *masculine* and *neuter* gender, and may accordingly mean of *one person*, or of *one thing*, and that very consistently with each other, and with the apostle's argument; though their being all of *one nature* seems to be most directly intended—A learned expositor has conjectured, that *all of one* means that Christ and the sanctified are all of *one father Abraham*, as he and all believers have the same faith with *Abraham*. But though this may be a good reason for Christ's calling them *brethren*, I do not see how it shows that it became God in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation *perfect through sufferings*, which is the very thing that the former part of this verse is brought to prove.

pleasure under that relation, as he did after his resurrection, (*John* xx. 17.) and will publicly do in the day of judgment. (*Mat.* xxv. 40.) And this corresponds to the representation which was made in the prophetic writings of his calling them *brethren*.

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

12 Saying to his Father, (*Pf.* xxii. 22.) I will make known the glory of thy perfections and councils, ways and works, to the honour of thy great name, with reference to the scheme of salvation, by opening it first in my personal ministry, and afterwards carrying it on in plainer and more extensive discoveries, 'till it be perfected, in the ministry of my servants, and by the illumination of my Spirit, that it may be fully manifested to thy children, to whom I stand nearly related by sameness of nature and covenant-constitution, as my brethren. I will joyfully celebrate* and publish the wondrous praises of thy love, to thy glory among them whom thou hast chosen, called, and sanctified to be a peculiar church and people unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me.

13 And again, in another prophetic representation of Christ, he is brought in as saying in the language of *David*, his type, (*Pf.* xviii. 2.) like one that has communion with his brethren in human affections, sufferings, and graces, as well as in nature, I will place all my trust and confidence in the Lord, who is *my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength*; (as it follows in that *psalm*) My dependence shall be entirely upon him to maintain my cause, to support me under, and carry me through all my trials and difficulties, to make me triumph over them, and to reward me for them in my own personal exaltation, and in effectually bringing the many sons to glory. (*ver.* 10.) And with a like acknowledgment of his relation to them as brethren, he says in another place, (*Isa.* viii. 18.) Behold, here am I, ready to do and suffer all that thou callest me to for the redemption of the children, whom thou in eternal councils of wisdom, love, and grace, hast given me, as my property and charge, that I might deliver them from all evil, and sanctify them for thy service, and for an enjoyment of thee; and that I might own, and take care of them, as my dear brethren,

NOTE.

* If *singing praises* is to be taken literally, our Lord did this with his disciples, the only gospel-church that he had then upon earth, a little before his death, when they *sung an hymn* at the close of the institution and celebration of the eucharist. (*Matth.* xxvi. 30.) But if we

take it in a laxer sense, for *setting forth the praises of God's name*, this Christ has done, still does, and will continue to do, through all generations in the church, by his word and Spirit, in its various ministrations and ordinances of divine worship.

thren, amidst all the scorn and reproach of men upon earth, and conduct them safe to heaven : And behold, I present them together with myself to thee, for thine acceptance, and for their everlasting happiness.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same ; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ;

14 Since then (*επει ου*) the children, which God had given to his Son to be saved by him, were of the human race, and (*κακοινωνητες*) had communion with the rest of mankind in human nature, as consisting not only of an immortal soul, but likewise of a mortal body of flesh and blood, which was capable of dying ; he also, who had an eternal pre-existence as God, condescended voluntarily to assume true human nature with all its essential properties, and natural, though sinless, infirmities, into personal union with himself, really and exactly according to their own likeness ; (*παρεπλησιως μετοιχι*) and so was allied as a near kinsman to them, that the right of redemption might lie in him, and that he, in the same nature which sinned, might make a proper satisfaction to the law and justice of God for it ; to the end that (*ου*) by means of his meritorious death, which he suffered in their room and stead, to take away their sins and the curse of the law, and to purchase a resurrection to eternal life, he might vanquish and (*καταργησιν*) entirely overthrow, or make void the power of that great destroying adversary, the devil, who, as a murderer from the beginning, was the means of bringing sin and death upon them by the first transgression ; and, as an executioner of divine justice, had an empire over death to inflict it in a penal way upon obstinate and incorrigible sinners, whenever God might permit him ; and to be afterwards their everlasting tormentor in the second death.

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.

15 And when Satan thought to have triumphed over Christ himself, by bringing him into the territories of death, This Captain of salvation utterly defeated him, as it were on his own ground ; and by that very means, which seemed of all others the most unlikely, and by which he himself seemed to be overcome, he disarmed that grand adversary of all his power, that in the virtue of his own death he might ransom all his children from the sting and terrors of death, and from its dominion over them ; and might, in the effectual application of his blood, actually free them from the guilt and power of sin, and give them a complete victory and triumph over death itself ; (1 Cor. xv. 26, 55, 56, 57.) even them, who through their formidable thoughts of death, or of its dreadful consequences, or of both, were all their lives long before liable to be sadly enslaved in their own minds, and a-

15. For verily

he took not on him
the nature of an-
gels; but he took
on him the seed of
Abraham.

17 Wherefore in
all things it beho-
ved him to be
made like unto
his brethren; that
he might be a mer-
ciful and faithful
high priest, in
things pertaining
to God, to make re-
conciliation for the
sins of the people:

fraid to die, whether they were Jews under the ter-
rors of the legal dispensation, or Heathen, that had
no hope of a better world beyond the grave.

16 For to accomplish these important ends, it is
most certainly true, that our blessed Lord did not
lay hold on the nature of angels, to take that into
personal union with himself, as though he had in-
tended to recover any from among them that fell from
their original rectitude and happiness*; but, passing
by the angelic nature, he graciously condescended to
lay hold on, and unite to himself, the far more infe-
rior nature of man, and to give it a peculiar subsist-
ence in his own divine person, as he derived it from
the patriarch Abraham, to whom God promised,
that, in his seed all the nations of the earth should
be blessed. (Gen. xxii. 18. and xxvi. 4.)

17 We may therefore infer from all this, that, in
order to Christ's duly answering the great design of
his office, as their Redeemer and Saviour, it was
highly fit and needful, and in the reason of things e-
very way proper, that he should partake of their na-
ture in all things that essentially belong to it, and
should come under their trials and sufferings, and in-
deed should be in every thing, as far as possible, in
the like condition with those brethren of his whom
he was to bring safe to glory; (ver. 10, 11.) that so
by his own experience of sufferings, which he under-
went for their sakes, in their nature and in their
stead, he might be the better qualified, and the more
feelingly engaged, to act the part of a compassionate,
tender-hearted high priest, and might be the more
touchingly stirred up to acquit himself with all fideli-
ty, in the discharge of his great undertaking for
them,

NOTE

* Verily he took not on him the na-
ture of angels, is understood by some to
signify, according to the rendering in the
margin, he did not take hold of the an-
gels, to help or rescue them; but he
took hold of the seed of Abraham, to help
or rescue them. But though I would
not wholly exclude that sense, in connec-
tion with the other, which lies in the
text of our version; yet Christ's assum-
ing human nature in his incarnation,
and not the nature of angels, seems to
be most immediately intended, answer-
able to the whole scope of the context:
And these words may be rendered, with-
out the supplement of nature, which is
added to the Greek in our translation, he
did not take to him of the angels, that
is, not any one of them; but he took to
him, of the seed of Abraham; or, with

the supplement, He did not take to him
the nature of angels; but took to him
the nature of the seed of Abraham;
where human nature is expressed by the
seed of Abraham; because our Lord de-
rived it from Abraham according to
Old Testament prophecies concerning
him; and because he therein had a pe-
culiar respect to the spiritual seed of A-
braham: And this might with propriety
enough be called Christ's taking to him,
or taking hold of, (ἐκράμματα) not
the nature of angels, but the human na-
ture in the line of Abraham; because in
his incarnation he assumed human nature
into personal union with himself, and so
laid hold of it in the most intimate and
endearing manner possible, in order to
his rescuing and saving it.

them, with relation to what he was to do with God on their behalf, in a way of satisfaction to his justice, for healing the breach which sin had made between him and them, and procuring peace and reconciliation with God for them; whom he represented and acted for, as taken from among men, and as therein typified by the *high priest under the law*. (See chap. v. 1.)

18 And as the typical high priest *could have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way, for that he himself also was compassed about with infirmities*, (chap. v. 2.) This is most remarkably and eminently true of Christ: For, in as much as, and in the very thing, (*in eo*) in which he himself underwent the severest tribulations, when he was in a state of trials and sufferings from Satan and the world, from the desertions of his Father and his own disciples, and from the reproaches and persecutions of his enemies, and his various troubles in soul and body; He, having triumphed over all these sorts of temptations in his own person, is both capable, inclined, and willing to support, comfort, and relieve all his brethren, that are exercised with any like afflictions and trials; as well remembering what he suffered by them, and well knowing how to make those dear objects of his sympathy and compassion, as victorious over them, as he himself was.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How much more excellent and important is the gospel of Christ, than the law of Moses! This was indeed spoken by the ministration of angels, and was divinely established; but that began to be spoken immediately in person by the incarnate Son of God himself, who is, both by nature and office, infinitely superior to the angels in heaven; and this blessed gospel is confirmed to us by many faithful witnesses, who heard it from his own mouth, and were empowered still farther to publish it, with infallible certainty, in all its extent and glory; God himself at the same time bearing witness to the truth of their testimony by various wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to the good pleasure of his will. And O what a great salvation, comprehensive of all spiritual and eternal blessings, and surpassing all thought, does the gospel bring to them that by faith receive it! With what care and diligence then should we attend to it, that we may embrace and retain it, and not let it slip out of our thoughts and hearts without any practical and saving improvement of it! If it were just in God to punish the despisers of Moses's law, and they suffered accordingly, How much heavier vengeance will he certainly take on the neglecters of his Son's gospel? But how astonishingly condescending is divine grace to mankind! Christ, passing by the angels, assumed our inferior nature, as derived from Abraham, into personal union with himself: And we may well cry out with admiration and joy, O what is man, that thou shouldst visit him in this kind manner by the Son of man! How low was our Lord brought for a little while! He was made lower than the angels in his state of humiliation, when, as the fruit of mere grace to the children whom God hath given him, he tasted the bitterest cup of death for their redemption. And how eminently is he now exalted in his mediatorial character in consequence of his sufferings, and as the righteous rewards of them! The New Testament church, and all its affairs, yea, all God's works of nature and providence are already put under his dominion; and though all his enemies are not yet actually subdued, they must at length fall before him.

How

Now highly is God glorified in his appointed way of salvation through a crucified and exalted Redeemer! This is a way becoming himself, who is the first cause and last end of all things: All the perfections of his nature, together with his law and government, shine forth with harmonious and illustrious honour, in bringing a vast multitude of his sons to glory, through the Captain of their salvation, who was perfected for the remainder of his office by sufferings, and was one with them in such an intimacy of nature and relation, as is a proper foundation of his undertakings and performances on their behalf, and of his owning and regarding them as his brethren. He died, that he might reconcile them to God, and sanctify them for access to him, and holy communion with him; that he might destroy the power of the devil, who brought sin and death into the world, and triumphed in the regions of mortality; and that he might take away the sting of death, and deliver his brethren from its penal consequences, who all their lives long before had been brought into bondage by its terrors. And O what a merciful and faithful high priest is Christ! How effectually has he procured his people's reconciliation to God by his blood! And how compassionately does he sympathize with them under all their temporal and spiritual trials, in remembrance of the bitterness of his own suffering the like for them; that he might seasonably help and relieve them in their most afflictive circumstances, till he carries them safe through all to eternal glory!

C H A P. III.

The apostle shews the superior worth and dignity of Christ, in his person and prophetic office, particularly above Moses, 1,—6. And represents to the Hebrews, from the example of their unbelieving ancestors, the sin and danger of infidelity and apostacy, and the necessity of faith in Christ, and of a stedfast adherence to him, in order to their entering into the heavenly rest, 7,—19.

TEXT.

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

PARAPHRASE.

SINCE the great Author of the gospel is so far more excellent than all the former prophets, and even than the angels themselves, (as has been observed, chap. i. ii.) Therefore, my dear brethren, who are so, not only by nation as Jews, but, in the judgment of charity, by grace as Christians, and are brethren to our Lord himself, and to one another; and who, by your profession and obligations, are an holy people, separated to him, and devoted to his service, as being sanctified by his blood and spirit; (chap. ii. 11.) who also are admitted to a partnership with the whole body of true believers in all the privileges and blessings of the gospel, to which ye are called by special grace, and which are of an heavenly nature, and relate to the heavenly state, as tending to it, and certainly issuing in it, according to your *high calling of God in Christ Jesus*; (Phil. iii. 14.) Let me beseech you to go along with me in farther attentively considering, and seriously reflecting upon, the super-eminent dignity of the glorious Son of God, of whose person and office I have been speaking, who is emphatically *the sent of God*, as the Father's

ther's divine messenger, by whom he has spoken to us in these last days; (chap. i. 2.) who is also our great high priest to purge our sins, and make reconciliation for them, as has been declared, chap. i. 3. and ii. 17. and as we profess to believe and own concerning him; and so is the author, life, and glory of our heavenly calling, and of our holy profession of his name, and of all our regards and hopes toward God, through him, even our Lord Jesus Christ, the only true and anointed Saviour;

1 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

2 Who executed his prophetic office * with all fidelity to God his Father, as he, according to eternal councils, and ancient prophecies, ordained and called him to it, constituted him in it, and sent him to fulfil it: He made known his Father's name, and the whole of his mind and will, relating to the faith, worship, obedience, and salvation of the church in every particular, and exactly according to his appointment; as it also must be owned, to the honour of Moses, the most famous of all the ancient prophets, (Numb. xii. 7.) that he, who was therein a type of Christ, faithfully discharged the office committed to him, in communicating the laws and ordinances which belonged to that dispensation, according to all that God commanded him, (Exod. xl. 16.) relating to the church of Israel, which then was God's household or family, (Numb. xii. 7.) as his church is, and may well be called; (1 Tim. iii. 15.) because he has prepared and set it apart for himself, has a peculiar property in it, presides over it, and dwells with a special and gracious presence of light and influence in it.

3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house.

3 Consider, I say, what a superlatively excellent one Christ is: For this glorious person, (εὐστος) who is truly, but not merely man, was infinitely more honourable in himself, and is to be esteemed as every way worthy of much greater glory than Moses, in his relation to the church; notwithstanding all the honour which that eminent man of God justly obtained for his fidelity in his high employment, as a minister of the law, Christ really is as much more excellent in his person and office, and as much to be preferred to him, as the lord and master of his house or family, who is the former and owner of it, and has prepared, erected, and governs it, is, in all reason, to be counted worthy of higher honour and glory than the

N O T E.

* Here the apostle, comparing Christ afterwards proceeds to discourse particularly, and at large, on his priesthood, as I think, to his prophetic office, as the chap. iv. 14. and in several following epistle of our profession; (ver. 1.) and chapters.

the family itself, or any member of it, (and *Moses* was no more) which derives from him, owes its being and all its advantages to him, and is his peculiar property for his own pleasure, use, and service.

4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

4 For as in the literal, so in the civil, political, and religious sense of the word, every house is prepared, erected, and fitted up (*οὐκ οὐκ*) by some principal founder and proprietor of it: But he that is the great builder of the church, as his own house,* that has provided all its materials, and ordered all its affairs for his own glory, both under the *Jewish* and gospel-dispensation, is, and cannot but be, God himself; it is his prerogative, and none but he could be their author; and so Christ, who is the great master-builder of the church, bears the super-eminent dignity of *God* in his relation to it.

5 And *Moses* verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

5 And to carry on this similitude, and apply it to the case in hand, it is indeed true, as has been observed, (*ver. 2.*) that *Moses* acted a very faithful and upright part, in delivering the divine laws and ordinances, about every thing that related to the church of God under the Old Testament dispensation: Only it must be remembered, that what he did therein, was not as *the Lord and Proprietor*, but merely in the quality of a *ministering servant* in God's house; he being so, and nothing more, to give a prefigurative representation to the *Israelites* of those great and excellent things of the gospel, which were afterwards to be more clearly revealed at large under the New Testament, and were witnessed to by his law; (*Rom. iii. 21.*) even such things as have been, and are to be still more particularly explained in this epistle.

6 But Christ, as a Son over his own house: whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

6 But Christ is so infinitely superior to *Moses*, that, though he graciously condescended to take upon him the form of a servant in his human nature and office-capacity; yet in what he has done relating to his house or family, he acted, not merely the part of a servant, but also of the lord and master, like the son and heir of his own house, which is peculiarly *his*, as well

N O T E.

* *He that built*, (*οὐκ οὐκ*) signifies *he that prepared, furnished, and set in order*, as well as *he that built*; and is never used to express God's work of creating; nor would it at all suit the apostle's argument to understand him, as speaking of the creation of all things, universally. But this word is often used to signify God's preparing such things as relate to the church and his worship; Thus in *Matth. xi. 10. Mark i. 2. Luke i. 17. and vii. 27.* it is used for *preparing or making ready* the way of the Lord;

and *Heb. ix. 2. 6.* for *making the tabernacle*, and ordering things relating to it; and it is used for *Noah's preparing an ark*, *Heb. xi. 7.* and *1 Pet. iii. 10.* which are all the places besides where it occurs, as far as I find in the New Testament: And therefore when the apostle says, *He that built all things is God*, it is most natural to consider it with reference only to all those things, that were the subject of the foregoing discourse, relating to the church under the figure of a house. (See *Dr. Owen on the place.*)

well as the *Father's*, as he has purchased the church with his own blood; has gathered it together, and formed all its members; has reduced it to its proper order, and settled all its ordinances and privileges by his own authority; and as he influences and governs it by his word and Spirit: The house or family of Christ, which I mean, and am speaking of as erected under the gospel-state, is no other than that of which we ourselves visibly, and really are, and shall prove to be living members, vitally united to him; in case we be not prevailed upon by the persecutions, temptations, and dangers that surround us, to apostatize from Christ to *Moses*; but carefully and strenuously retain, and persevere in a bold and open profession of his name, on whom our hope is built; and, notwithstanding all the tribulations that befall us, continue, on a principle of faith, to maintain our rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, with steadfastness to the end of our lives. (*Chap. x. 23.*)

7 Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice,

7 To apply all this therefore for the caution of *nominal professors* against apostacy, and for the quickening of *real believers* to hold on, and hold out to the end, in their holy profession of Christ and his gospel; let me remind you of what the Holy Ghost in the inspired writings of *David*, (*Psal. xcvi. 7, &c.*) says to the *Jews* of his day, who are set forth as examples to us, (*1 Cor. x. 6, 11.*) It is to this effect; *Now*, immediately, and without delay, while the present day of God's mercy and patience lasts, and the messengers of his grace are sent to you, if ye would attend to, regard and embrace what he says by them, for your own spiritual and eternal advantage;

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

8 Take heed that you do not wilfully shut your eyes against his light, or stop your ears against his voice, and resist his Spirit; and so harden your hearts against his fear, and against all the methods of his wisdom and love for your present and future happiness, as the former generation of my professing people did, by their provoking unbelief, strifes, and murmurings against the Lord and his servant *Moses*, as particularly at *Massah* and *Meribah*, (*Exod. xvii. 2,—7.*) in the day of their tempting me by distrust- ing my power and goodness, after all my wonderful appearances for them; and in the day of my trying them by various dealings with them, while they were sojourning in the desert of *Arabia*;

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

9 When on that, and several other occasions, your ancestors, according to the flesh, and in visible covenant-relation to me, called in question my providential and gracious presence with them, and care of them, saying in the language of unbelief, *Is the Lord*

amongst us, or not? (Ex. xvii. 7.) And when, at another time, they demanded appearances of my favour on their behalf, beyond what they distrustfully imagined I either would, or could give them; saying, (Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20.) *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Can he provide flesh for his people?* They often put my faithfulness, power, and kindness to the trial, with an unworthy suspicious temper of mind, as though I would not be mindful of my promise, or were not able to perform it for their relief; no, nor to revenge the quarrel of my covenant upon refractory transgressors of it, though they had all along experimental proofs with the highest evidence to the contrary: And they went on in this manner to provoke me times and ways without number, even while they saw my marvellous works, both of judgment and mercy, forty years together, from the time of my bringing them with an out-stretched arm from *Egypt*, till the end of their journeyings through that barren wilderness, where they lived under my immediate protection and supplies, in their way to the land of *Canaan*.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

10 Therefore, to speak after the manner of men, who are troubled at disagreeable events, and particularly at things that reflect a dishonour upon themselves, and carry the marks of the basest ingratitude, I was all that while sorely displeased, offended, and at length wearied out, with the repeated and aggravated incredulity and misbehaviour of the people of that age, even to the despising of my most merciful care and kindness, and reflecting on the honour of my name; and thereupon I said, in just resentment against them, They continually, on all occasions, go on in the perverse counsels and dispositions of their own hearts, running astray from me; and they have not attended to, and entertained due apprehensions of the ways of my providence, whether of judgment or mercy toward them, which they have seen in the course of my dispensations; (ver. 9.) nor did they approve of, and practically observe the ways of my precepts, even the ways of truth, holiness, and peace, which I set before them, and enjoined upon them, that they might walk therein.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

11 Upon the whole, my patience was so worn out by their incredulity and disobedience, that, in my righteous indignation, I swear by myself, (Numb. xiv. 28,—30.) and so declared with all the solemnity of an oath, which shews my word to be irrevocable, that, for their high and numberless provocations obstinately persisted in, as surely as I live, the carcasses of that evil generation shall fall in the wilderness;

ness; and none of them from twenty years old and upwards, except *Caleb* and *Joshua*, men of a better spirit, shall enter into the land of *Canaan*, which I had promised to *Abraham* and his seed, as a land of quietness, peace, and plenty; a land in which the ark of the covenant should be fixed, as my resting place among them, (*Psal.* cxxxii. 5, 8.) and which was to be a type of my dwelling in my church, to give them a spiritual rest on earth, and afterwards in heaven, where they shall rest from all their labours, sins, and sorrows, and enjoy the most complete and everlasting happiness in my immediate presence.

11 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

12 Being therefore warned by these awful examples, * which are left for our admonition; and being excited by a consideration of the dignity of Christ's person and office, and of the near concern we have with him, and the rich advantages we may hope for from him, (*ver.* 6.) carefully see to it, (*βλεψατε*) look about you, look upwards and inwards, my dear brethren in the profession, and, as I trust, in the saving benefits of the gospel: Be watchful with holy jealousy over yourselves, and with humble dependence on divine grace, lest at any time, (*μὴ ᾧτι*) through the corruption of your own hearts, and the temptations of Satan and of this present world, unbelief, especially as proceeding from an habitually sinful temper of soul, wickedly prevail in any of you, which is in itself a most provoking evil, as it is a distrust of God, and gives him the lie, and so reflects the highest dishonour upon his authority, veracity, power, and grace, and is the root and beginning of, works and leads to, and, unless subdued, will certainly issue (as it did in your rebellious ancestors) in all backslidings, and apostacies from the only living and true God, who, inclusive of the Son, (*ver.* 4, 6.) as one God with the Father, has necessarily and essentially life in himself, and is the author of spiritual and eternal life to believers; and lives for ever to fulfil his promises to them, and his threatnings to those that wilfully depart from him.

13 But exhort one another daily while it is called, To.

13 But as a means of preventing this dreadful evil, be ye not only watchful over your own hearts, to guard against the first workings of unbelief and apostacy

P p 2

N O T E.

* Here the apostle pursues his exhortation, which he was entering upon, *ver.* 7.; and, to prepare the way for the better enforcement of it, mentioned the case of the disobedient *Israelites*, in the intermediate verses, which are to be considered as a parenthesis; and so this verse

stands in connection with the *wherefore* in *ver.* 7. but is now brought in with the greater advantage in his arguing from God's dispensations toward that unbelieving people, to his proceedings with the professors of Christ under the gospel-state.

To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

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lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,

tacy in yourselves; but shew a mutual tender concern for one another, by continually exciting and encouraging each other (*καὶ ἐκαστὸν ἑκαστὸν*) day by day and every day, as opportunities and occasions offer, to steadfastness in the faith, and to a holy circumspect care and caution, in dependence on divine grace, against carnality of mind, supineness and negligence; and against the temptations of Satan, the allurements and terrors of this world, and every thing that has a tendency to carry you off from Christ and the gospel: Attend to this as your present duty, while the day of life is continued, and the day of gospel-grace lasts, which will soon come to a period at death, and will do so, particularly to the Jews, at the approaching destruction of Jerusalem; let these Christian-offices of brotherly love and faithfulness be discharged to each other out of hand; lest any one of your number, that professes the same faith, and is partaker of the same external privileges of the gospel with yourselves, should be lulled asleep and stupified, and so led aside and seduced from Christ, through the guileful arts of indwelling sin, and the treachery with which it works in his heart, to magnify the terror of sufferings for Christ, and the pleasure of worldly ease, affluence, and safety; and to put a favourable construction and a fine gloss upon such evil ways of heart and life, as are destructive to his own soul.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

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14 It is of the utmost consequence, for preserving us from this deceitfulness of sin and hardness of heart, to see to it that we are in truth what we profess to be: For it evidently appears, that (*μετὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν*) we really have been brought into a happy partnership with Christ*, in his righteousness, Spirit, grace, and benefits, as persons vitally united to him, and interested in all that he is and has, if we hold fast (*τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἐλπίδος κατὰ κράτος*) our spiritual subsistence in him, and steadfastly maintain our holy confidence in our profession of him, which commenced upon our first believing; and persevere therein, against all opposition and danger, to the end of our lives.

15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden

15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden

15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden

15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden

15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden

15 Take heed therefore to yourselves, and do all that in you lies to fortify every one his brother against temptations to apostacy; and lay hold on the present

NOTE
* As the apostle here speaks, not of a future benefit, or of a promise for time to come, but of what was already actually enjoyed, the words, *if we hold fast* *the beginning of our confidence* *steadfast to*

the end, seem to be brought in, as a proof and evidence, and not as a condition of being made, or rather of having been made, partakers of Christ. (See Dr. Owen on the place.)

harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

present time for it, (*ἡ τῶ λυτῶσαι*) in that, or for as much as, for preventing sloth, negligence, and delay, it is said by God himself, in the place but now quoted * (*ver. 7, 8.*) To-day, while life and opportunity are continued, (it being absolutely uncertain whether a *morrow* will be afforded you or not) if ye would believe and obey what he says unto you for your own good, take heed of contracting an insensibility and hardness of heart, that resists all kindly impressions, as your fathers did when they provoked the anger of the Lord against themselves, by their unbelief and rebellion in the wilderness.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

16 For some of them, † (to express it in the tenderest manner possible) when they had heard the voice of the Lord in the promulgation of the law at mount *Sinai*, † and heard the instructions he gave them by the ministry of *Moses*, with regard to typical ordinances of worship, and the promised land of *Canaan*, which was a figure of heaven itself; they, instead of being suitably affected and influenced by it, were guilty of the highest provocations in the manner before mentioned. (*ver. 9.*) However, all of them, that were brought out of *Egyptian* bondage, did not go into those evil ways that were so extremely offensive to God: For *Caleb* and *Joshua* were men of a better spirit, and entered into the holy land: And so, blessed be God, it is only *some*, and not *all* the *Jews*, that have rejected the gospel of salvation in these days, after they had heard it in the ministrations of Christ, and of his servants. (*Chap. ii. 3.*)

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them

17 But who were they of that former generation of the *Israelites*, with whom God was so highly offended for forty years together, as to exclude them from the land, which he had promised to *Abraham* and

NOTES.

* The apostle here re-assumes the consideration of the case of the unbelieving *Israelites*, to enforce his argument. † Nothing can be more like the spirit of the apostle *Paul*, than the almost inimitable prudence, with which he prevents offence to the *Jews*, and all appearance of harshness, in representing so awful a case of their fathers: He speaks of only *some*; though it were in a manner the whole body of the *Israelites*, that provoked; and throws in this further mitigation, *howbeit not all*, though there were only *two* exceptions, as to those that were twenty years old and upwards, when they came out of *Egypt*. (See *Numb. xiv. 29, 30.*)

† Though, perhaps, here may be a most immediate reference to God's speak-

ing with an audible voice by the ministry of angels, in the delivery of the *ten commandments* at mount *Sinai*; yet I think what he said to *Israel* by his servant *Moses*, relating to the institutions of the *ceremonial law*, which was their gospel, and to the promise of *Canaan* which was an eminent type of heaven itself, is to be included; because the apostle afterwards speaks of the *gospel's* being preached to us as well as to them; (*chap. iv. 2.*) and the *Jews* themselves, as their writers tell us, accounted the land of *Canaan* to be a figure of the heavenly rest. (See *Ainsworth* on *Gen. xii. 5.*) and our apostle seems plainly to consider it under this notion, *chap. xi. 9, 10, 14, 15, 16.*

them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

and to his seed? It certainly was not with all of them promiscuously without distinction. Was it not with them who had rebelled and murmured against him in the most notorious manner, and *that* repeatedly through unbelief? Yes, certainly it was with them, and them only, who, as a just punishment of their iniquities, were destroyed; and whose dead bodies lay slain by the righteous judgment of God, like miserable and detestable objects, in the howling desert, through which they were passing, before any of them reached the happy country to which they were bound.

18 And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

18 And who were they among that people, against whom God was so greatly incensed, as to swear in his just and awful anger, that they should not be admitted to enjoy the privileges, peace, and blessings of that rest, which was to be possessed in *Canaan*, according to his appointment? It was not against the faithful among them; no, but only against those of them, who, notwithstanding all their professions and obligations, and all the wonderful appearances of God among them, rejected him by unbelief; as is plain from what he said, not only concerning them, but to them. (*Numb. xiv. 28, 29.*)

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

19 Upon the whole then, we plainly see, and should observe and consider it to humble and caution us, and to engage our constant dependence on divine grace for keeping us close to Christ, that they could not be admitted to set one foot on the holy land, in order to their enjoying its blessings, how desirous soever they were of it; because of their unbelief, which was the root and spring of all their other provocations, and forfeited all right and claim to the promise of entering into that rest, and so excluded them from it.

RECollections.

With what incomparable dignity does our Lord Jesus Christ transcend *Moses*, in his person and office? *Moses* was merely a man, and a servant; and the best that can be said of him is, that he was a part of God's house, and faithful in his ministry: But Christ is more than a mere man or servant; he is the God that formed his church, and orders all its affairs; and is the Lord, proprietor, and ruler of it; and in all his administrations is faithful to his Father that appointed him to his office, as a divine Mediator and Saviour. How worthy is he of our highest regard! All, that profess to be partakers of the heavenly calling, should think frequently and honourably of him, as the great apostle and high priest of their profession, and hold fast the beginning of their confidence, and their rejoicing therein, to the end, as ever they would prove themselves to be true members of his family, in which he dwells, and will be glorified here, and for ever hereafter. How watchful should we be against the first workings of unbelief, and much more against the prevalence of it! This is a mother-sin, that leads the way to all others: It proceeds from the corruption of the heart, and is in itself exceeding sinful: It is no less than a departure from the living God and Saviour, in whom is all our help, hope, and happiness. And, ah, how dreadful are the effects of apostasy! It is the highest provocation to God, and hardening of the heart against him. It is a shamefully distrustful tempting him; a grief to his good Spirit; and a contemptuous inob-

vance of all his dispensations of mercy and judgment; and brings the heaviest vengeance upon apostates themselves. How should the examples of others unbelief and rebellion against God, and of their punishment, be a solemn warning to us, that we may not tread in their steps; but may be excited to an obediential faith without delay, while the door of mercy is open in the gospel! It is our greatest interest and duty to attend, and yield ourselves up, to what the Holy Ghost says in his word, and in secret suggestions to our souls; and not harden our hearts against it, lest God should, ere we are aware, swear in his wrath, that we shall never enter into the rest which he has provided for his people. But how great is the deceitfulness of sin to stupify the conscience! And what need have believers themselves to be daily cautioned, and to caution one another against it! No outward privileges or professions of religion will secure us from divine wrath, if our hearts are not right with God: But, blessed be his name, there are some of a more excellent spirit, like *Caleb* and *Joshua*, that shall enter into eternal rest. They are already partakers of Christ, and of the benefits of his purchase, and shall for ever enjoy him in the glorious state of heavenly rest. But a perseverance in faith, and in a holy profession of it, is the best proof and evidence of its sincerity, and that this is our happy case. In vain do others pretend to it; but they that abide in Christ, as all true believers do, are kept by the power of God, through faith, to complete salvation.

C H A P. IV.

The apostle inculcates an humble cautious fear upon the Hebrews, lest any of them should come short of the promised rest through unbelief, 1, 2. Shows the much greater excellence of the heavenly rest, which is proposed in the gospel, than that of the earthly Canaan, which was set before the Israelites under the law, 3,—10. And concludes with the most awakening and encouraging arguments and motives to faith and hope in our approaches to God, 11,—16.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

LET us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

SINCE God dealt so severely, in his righteous judgment, with his ancient people for their disobedience and unbelief, as has been observed; (*chap. iii. 7,—19.*) and since his dispensations toward them were designed as an admonition to us, we may justly expect to be dealt with in like manner, if we be guilty of the like sins, especially considering the richer advantages we now enjoy, above what they had then: It therefore should be matter of deep concern with us, to maintain an awful reverence of the greatness, holiness, and justice of God, and a religious dread of provoking him, not with a distrustful, dismaying, and disheartning, but with a watchful and cautious fear, to put us upon a diligent use of all means, in an humble dependence on his grace, for our own and each others preservation from apostacy, and from the terrible consequences of it, that as God under the gospel-state has left on record, and proposed for our encouragement, a gracious promise of admittance to a state of peace and holy communion with him, through Christ, in truly evangelical worship and obedience in
this

this world, and of a glorious rest and peace in the world to come; and as this, of all others, may be emphatically styled *God's rest*, not only as he is the author of it, but chiefly as he complacently rests in Christ the purchaser of it, and is well pleased with his people in him, and with the accomplishment of all the designs of his grace through him, and as it is the last and most perfect rest, that he will ever give them, and he himself is the sum of its felicity and glory; so the utmost care and caution ought to be used, lest any of you, through sloth and unbelief, in some season of temptation, should reject and forsake the promise, and so neglect the great salvation of the gospel, (*chap. ii. 3.*) and fall short of an enjoyment of it; or should even so much as appear, to yourselves or others, to flag in your Christian course, and to be so distanced in it, as not to reach its special blessings here, and the glorious inheritance of eternal life hereafter, as the *Israelites* fell short of the promised land, through their infidelity and disobedience.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

2 For the gospel of salvation by Jesus Christ has now been preached to us, who sit under the ministration of it, as it formerly was, for substance, though more obscurely, to our ancestors: But (*ο λόγος της αρανης*) the good word, which was communicated to them in the ordinance of hearing, as God's appointed means of begetting faith, did not become effectual, and turn to any real advantage, as to many of those that heard it in the ministry of *Moses* and other inspired writers, that testified of Christ; (*John v. 39, 46.*) because they did not receive, appropriate, and apply it by faith to themselves; and so it was not united, and as it were incorporated with their hearts, as food is with the body, when it is eaten, and turned into suitable nourishment by a proper digestion of it: No more will the gospel of the grace of God, which is now more plainly preached to, and heard by us in the ministry of Christ's servants, be really and eventually profitable to us; unless we receive and digest it by faith, as our spiritual food, and it become *an ingrafted word, which is able to save our souls.* (*James i. 21.*)

3 For we which have believed, do enter

3 For as entering into any rest, which God has promised to his people, is only in a way of believing; for

N O T E.

* The great design of the apostle in this and the following verses, down to the 10th, is to prove that there is a promise of rest peculiar to the gospel-state, and to obviate an objection, as though what he had alledged and insisted on,

chap. iii. 7.—19. from *Psal. xcvi. 11.* to enforce his exhortation to the *Hebrews*, lest they should fall short of it, did not affect them; because God's rest spoken of there, or in any other part of the Old Testament, related only to the rest of the

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enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

so those of us, who, by a true and lively faith, have received and trusted in Christ, and in the promise of eternal life, as proposed to us in the gospel, do thereby already enter into a state of spiritual rest and peace, in communion with God through him, according to the light and grace of the New Testament-dispensation; and we, even now, enter by faith and hope in gospel-worship, into the heavenly rest within the veil, as a pledge and assurance to us of our personally entering hereafter into the full possession of it, *whither Jesus the forerunner is entered for us:* (chap. vi. 20.) And that such an excellent state of rest was designed of God for New Testament-believers, far exceeding that of the land of *Canaan*; as also that none but true believers shall enter into it, is evident, if we compare the several passages where the scripture speaks of *God's rest*, which he has gradually introduced in different ages of the world; as for instance, He said of the unbelieving refractory *Jews* in the wilderness, (*Psal.* xcvi. 11.) I, in my just and hot displeasure, have pronounced irreversibly, with all the solemnity of an oath, that, as surely as I live, I myself will cease to be God, if any of them shall have admission into my rest. This, by just construction, according to the rule of contraries, plainly implies a promise, that sincere and faithful believers among them should enter into it; (*ver.* 6.) and supposes that the rest proposed to them was yet to be expected, although there was a former rest of God, which was then subsisting, and commenced immediately upon his having, at the beginning of the world, perfected the work of creation in six days; and so there was a rest of God near three thousand years before that of the land of *Canaan*.

4 For,

N O T E.

the land of *Canaan* and the rest of the seventh-day *Sabbath*, (*ver.* 4.) which were now no longer matter of *promise*, they having been already actually enjoyed. The apostle therefore shews in these verses, that it may be collected, even from what is said in that *psalm* itself, that there is, in reality, a promise of another rest of God, beside those; and so supports and strengthens his argument for taking heed, lest they should fall short of this most excellent rest. It is, I own, no easy matter to set the several steps of his reasoning on this head in a clear and obvious light, but it will be a great help to our understanding it, if we consider that he speaks of three sorts of God's rest; one, which

commenced upon the finishing of the work of creation, *ver.* 3, 4.; another, which was afterward proposed to *Israel* in the wilderness, as to be enjoyed in the land of *Canaan*, *ver.* 5.; and a third, which, after both those rests, was to be enjoyed in the gospel-state and heavenly world, *ver.* 6.—11.: And by comparing what the scripture says of all these rests, it appears that there is still a better rest that remains for true believers, than either of the two first before-mentioned; and that is an eternal rest in heaven, inclusive of the spiritual and holy rest which they have in Christ by faith here, as the beginning and earnest, and as issuing in the possession, of glory hereafter.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

4 For, with respect to that former sort of rest, he had spoke of the seventh day of the week, in a certain well-known passage of the Old Testament, after this manner, as it is recorded, (*Gen. ii. 2, 3.*) the whole of which (as ye who are so conversant with the scriptures may easily recollect) stands thus, *On the seventh day God ended his work, which he had made: And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made,* that is, not as though he were weary, and needed rest for refreshment after labour, as men do: But as rest supposes, and refers to some preceding work; so God, having completed his work of creation, ceased from doing any thing further of that kind, and expressed his great pleasure and satisfaction in what he had done; with regard to which it is said, *that on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed:* (*Exod. xxxi. 17.*) And, in token of this, he appointed that day to be observed and enjoyed by man after six days labour, as a sabbath of spiritual and holy, as well as of bodily rest, when *he blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.* (*Exod. xx. 11.*) That therefore could not be the rest intended, when God swore that the obstinate and rebellious *Israelites* should not enter into it.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

5 And again, in the same place, (*Psal. xcvi. 11.*) he speaks of another rest besides, and after this, saying, Let me not live, if they enter into my rest; which, as it refers to the *Jesus* in the wilderness, to whom it was first spoken, is indeed to be understood of their entering into the land of *Canaan* at the end of their toilsome journeyings through that vast desert, in resemblance of God's having ceased from those extraordinary and wonderful operations of providence, whereby he supported and defended them, and drove out the former inhabitants of that country, and made way for his people to go into it and take possession of it: But as it refers to the people in *David's* own day, to whom these words were spoken and applied, as recited in the *Psalms*, after they had been in actual possession of the land of *Canaan* about four hundred and fifty years; (*Acts xiii. 20.*) it must have a farther meaning, than barely that rest, which they then enjoyed there.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached, entered

6 Since therefore, as is strongly implied in the threatening against them that believed not, (*απολυται*) there is still left a promise of rest in the word of God, (*ver. 1.*) which true believers should certainly be partakers of, according to his design and appointment,

entered not in be-
cause of unbelief:

7 Again he li-
miteth a certain
day, saying in Da-
vid, To-day, after
so long a time; as
it is said, To-day
if ye will hear his
voice, harden not
your hearts.

8 For if Jesus
had given them
rest, then would
he not afterward
have spoken of a-
nother day.

ment, as, in fact, the next generation of *Israelites* in the wilderness were of the promised land; and since (*οι προτεροι πατρισται*) the generality of those *Jews* to whom the good tidings of entering in- to that typical rest was first published in the wilder- ness, fell short of it by means, and on account of their provoking unbelief, though others were after- wards brought to possess it.

7 For this reason, * I say, God, after all this, a- gain (*αυτου*) prescribes and fixes by *David*, in the forementioned *Psalms*, a certain day or season then to come, in which those of that age were to seek an entrance into his rest, after they had been for so ma- ny years actually settled in the land of *Canaan*, ac- cording to what is there said, even then, by way of caution to them, If ye would hearken to the voice of God, relating to the time of this further promised rest, which ye ought to do now immediately without delay, lest ye never have an opportunity afterwards for it. Take heed that ye do not despise, and so harden your hearts against, his awful admonitions and gracious promises, with regard to this rest, as your fathers did in the wilderness, with regard to their rest in *Canaan*. This plainly shows, that what is there said related, not to the rest, which was al- ready enjoyed, but to one which was to be enjoyed after they were in full possession of the promised land.

8 For if *Joshua*, whose name is called by the *Greeks* *Jesus*, which signifies a *Saviour*, and who was a type of Jesus Christ as the great Captain of salvation, that conducts believers to their spiritual and eternal rest; If, I say, *Joshua* the son of *Nun*, had given the *Is- raelites* possession of the ultimate rest intended in the *Psalms*, by his having brought them into, and settled them, so long before, in the land of *Canaan*; (*Josh.* xxii. 4.) then, (*μετα ταυτα*) after these things had been actually accomplished so many hundred years before, God would not still have spoke by *David* of another day or season, in which the people that then dwelt in possession of the promised land, were to seek after a further rest, which was typified by that, and could be

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* I take this verse to be brought in, as an argument to prove what had been said, *ver. 6.* about a promise being left of a rest yet to come, *ver. 1.* rather than as another argument, distinct from that, to prove the same point; and so the *therefore*, *ver. 6.* refers to the case of God's saying what is alledged in this verse, the first words of which I think

may be better read, *he again limiteth*, than *again he limiteth*, as though one argument was contained in *ver. 6.* and another was added in this, to prove the same thing; whereas, if it were so, they would probably have been connected by the copula *and* again, as is usual in such cases, and as we had it in *ver. 5.* (*και αλλου*)

no other, than what was to be introduced by Jesus, the Messiah himself.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

9 Upon the whole then, since neither the rest of the *seventh-day-sabbath*, nor of the land of *Canaan* were, or could be intended by that last mentioned day, which was spoken of after both those former rests were actually enjoyed, it is evident, that there still remains under the gospel-state, a more complete and glorious rest, which was typified by, and is vastly preferable to those rests, and is to be inherited by the true people of God, inclusive of a *spiritual rest* by faith in Christ, and of the *sabbatism* or day of holy and joyful rest, as a *New Testament-sabbath*, in commemoration of his resurrection from the dead; but principally and ultimately consisting of that *heavenly rest*, which these are foretastes and pledges of, and which, in virtue of what Christ has done and suffered, believers shall be admitted to, and continue with him in the full enjoyment of for ever.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

10 For our Lord, having gone through the great work of redemption in his obedience, sufferings, and death*, rose again and took possession of heavenly glory; and so rested from all the labours, sufferings, and trials, which before he underwent, in finishing the work that his Father gave him to do, and in procuring a blessed rest for his people, a pledge of which is given in the New Testament-sabbath: And every true believer that has entered by faith into the spiritual rest of the gospel-state, and of a holy sabbatism here upon earth, has done with all the works of iniquity; so as to be no longer a lover, practiser, or willing servant of sin,

N O T E.

* It is pretty remarkable, that, in the *Greek*, the apostle, *ver. 9.* changes the term, and uses another word (*καταπαύσεως*) which signifies a *sabbatism*, to express the rest that remains for the people of God, different from that, (*καταπαύσεως*) which he had all along used before, and returns to again, *ver. 10.* to express the rest of God and his people. The reason of this alteration, says the learned *Dr. Owen*, and several other noted divines, is to include the day of *sabbatical rest*, which God has appointed under the *gospel-state*, correspondent to what had been said, *ver. 4.* about the *seventh-day sabbath*; inasmuch that as that day of sabbatical rest was appointed immediately upon, and in commemoration of, God's resting from the work of creation; so the New Testament day of sabbatical rest, or the first day of the

week, was appointed immediately upon, and in commemoration of, Christ's resting from the work of redemption, when he rose from the dead, and entered into his rest, as having ceased from his own former work, as God did from his. The reader may see these interpretations argued for at large in *Dr. Owen* on these verses, and in his exertations on the sabbath; and argued against by *Mr. Peirce* on this place. However, as, after all, there seem to be considerable difficulties attending each of these interpretations, and I cannot be positive whether a *Christian sabbath* be intended; or whether he that has entered into his rest, refers to Christ, or to believers, I have thought proper to take in all these senses, which may be done without one's excluding the other; and so leave every reader to choose that which he judges to be best.

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as formerly he was ; and he has ceased from trusting or resting, as he used to do, in any of his own works of righteousness, though not ceased from *the practice* of them ; who having finished his course of obedience, trial, and conflict, in this life, and entered into a complete and glorious rest in the celestial state, he has not only ceased, and that entirely, from all the sins, but likewise from all the toils, persecutions, and sorrows of every kind, that attended him in this evil world : (*Rev. xiv. 13.*) And both Christ himself, and every true believer in him, according to their respective conditions, have in this manner rested from their labours, in resemblance of what God did at the beginning of the world, who, when he had finished the work of creation, ceased from working after that sort any more.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

11 As therefore the sweetest rest comes after labour, and is greatly recommended and enhanced by it ; and as ye have heard what an excellent rest, superior to all others, is proposed to believers in the promises of the gospel ; let it *, answerable to the exhortation given, (*ver. 1.*) be our diligent care and study, and our earnest endeavour in the use of all appointed means, and in humble dependence on divine grace, to overcome all difficulties, and break through all oppositions and discouragements, from within and from without, that we may have access into all the privileges and blessings of the gospel-state here, which will be an unspeakable refreshment to our own souls, and give them the most composed and delightful rest in Christ, suitable to our circumstances here ; and that we may have a safe and triumphant arrival to the heavenly glory hereafter, where we shall rest from all our labours, sins, and sorrows, and enter into peace, and into the joy of our Lord, and be possessed of all possible blessedness with him for ever ; let us, I say, be deeply concerned at heart about this rest, each one for himself, and stir up one another, to look out after it ; lest as the carnal *Israelites*, notwithstanding their visible relation to God, and their having a promise of *Canaan* set before them, were so disheartened by real or imagined terrors, wants, and dangers, through the powerful workings of unbelief, as not to arrive at that promised rest ; so any amongst us that hear the gospel, and are professors of faith in Christ, should, through slothfulness,

N O T E.

* The apostle here returns to his exhortation, *ver. 1.* to take heed, lest any of them should fall short of the promised rest through unbelief ; and does this now with greater advantage, in consideration

of the proof he had given in the intermediate verses of the *certain and superior excellence* of that rest, which belongs to the gospel, above what was enjoyed in the land of *Canaan*.

fulness, fear, and unbelief, never attain to that spiritual rest, which is begun in grace here to be perfected in glory hereafter; but should fail of entering into it, in like manner, and for the same cause, as they fell short of the earthly *Canaan*. Let their sin and punishment be an instruction and a cautionary example to us; lest we, being left to ourselves, plunge into both as they did.

11 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

12 There is the greatest reason to maintain a godly jealousy over ourselves and over one another, lest this should be the awful case of any of us, that make a profession of Christ's name; and there is good encouragement for an exercise of the utmost care and caution herein: For our Lord Jesus Christ, who (as ye well know) bears the character of *the Word of God*, is *the living One*, and *the Prince of life*, (Rev. i. 18. and Acts iii. 15.) who has life in himself, and is the author of it to others; (*John v. 25,—29.*) * and the written word, even *the holy scripture*, which is the word of revelation, has a quickening virtue in it, as animated by his Spirit, (*John vi. 63.*) to raise dead souls to spiritual life, and to make living souls lively: And Christ, the eternal Word, exerts a divine energy by means of the written word, as he makes it mightily

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* By the word of God some here understand Christ, the personal word of God, who was usually styled the Word; and the Word of God in the writings of the Jews, to whom this epistle was sent, and is often so called in the New Testament, as particularly in *John i. 1. 14.* and *Rev. xix. 13.*; and he may probably be meant by the word of God's grace in *Acts xx. 32.* (See the note there.) But others understand the word of God here to signify the Holy Scripture, which is frequently mentioned under that title, as in *Luke v. 1. and xi. 28.* and *Acts viii. 14. and xi. 1. and xiii. 7, 44, 46.* All the properties ascribed to the word of God, in this and the next verse, evidently belong to our Lord Jesus Christ; and some of them seem to be so personal, as most fitly to be applied to him, who, I think, is fairly to be understood as described, *ver. 13.* where it is said, in connection with this verse, *neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do:* And yet the properties of the word of God, in the verse before us, may, in some sense, be applied to the written word, as attended with his energy in the reading,

preaching, and hearing of it; and the connection with the preceding context seems to give countenance to this application of these passages: For Christ may be here considered as the author of, and as working by the word, to enforce the exhortation to take heed of rejecting it by unbelief. However, it is difficult to determine with certainty which of these is most precisely intended; the arguments for one and the other may be seen in various learned and critical commentators, such as Dr. Owen, who takes it to be meant of Christ; and Dr. Whitby and Mr. Peirce, who understand it of the written word. But as all that is here ascribed to the word of God, relates to what Christ does by means of the written word, and to what the written word cannot do, but as made efficacious for it by him, it amounts to much one and the same thing in the apostle's argument, whether we here consider Christ, or the Scripture, to be signified by the word of God; and therefore both senses are taken into the paraphrase, which may be done with the utmost consistency, while we consider one as the efficient cause, and the other as the instrument of the operations, which are ascribed to it.

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mightily impressive on the mind and conscience, to convince of sin, and subdue its power, and captivate every high thought to the obedience of Christ; (2 Cor. x. 4.) as also to strike terror into hypocritical souls, and to comfort the hearts of sincere believers: And his agency by his word, which is the *sword of the Spirit*, and like a sharp *two-edged sword* that proceeds out of his mouth, (Ephes. vi. 17. and Rev. i. 16.) is more cutting and penetrating into the inmost recesses of the heart, than the sharpest sword can be, when thrust into the body; its mighty strength, in the hand of Christ, makes its way to the inmost parts of a man, reaching unto (*διερχόμενος*) the animal or sensitive, and the intellectual soul; (see the note on 1 Thess. v. 23.) and even dividing between them, so as either to reduce them to a holy order in sanctifying *bath*, and keeping them in their distinct and proper places, with a due subordination of the affections and passions to the understanding in true believers; or to procure death and ruin in executing judgments upon false professors, by the power of Christ according to his word: And the eternal Son of God, by his word, and his Spirit accompanying it, instantly pierces, in a way of mercy, or of judgment, the most hidden parts, as the joints and marrow of the human body, that lie out of view, are reached by a sharp sword, that strikes home, and gives the deepest wound: The eternal word also, by his omnipresence, searches, knows, and judges of the regular, or sinful thoughts and principles, motives, purposes, and ends, that work in every one's heart, (Rev. ii. 23.) as well as the outward acts of his life; and his written word in the ministrations of it, as rendered powerful by him, discovers a man's whole soul to himself; and tells him all that is in his heart, either to humble or comfort him, or to condemn or acquit him, according to the real state and condition in which he stands before God, as a hypocrite, or true believer.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked, and opened unto

13 Nor is it possible for any of us to escape Christ's most critical notice, or to be out of the reach of his powerful operations, one way or other, upon our minds and consciences by his word; * there being no creature, of what rank or kind so ever,

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* In his sight, undoubtedly relates, not to the written word, but either to God or Christ; for his sight is a personal character, as appears from the expression itself, and from what follows in immediate connection with it; and it seems to me, that we are to understand it as

meant more directly of Christ, than of God the Father, though not exclusive of him: For it was not God himself but the *word of God*, that was the subject all along spoken of in the preceding verse, as working in such a lively, powerful, and piercing manner; and here, in confirmation

unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

ever, that lies concealed from his all-comprehensive view; *who knows all things*; (John xxi. 17.) and *who searches the reins and the heart, and will give unto every one according to his works*: (Rev. ii. 23.) None of them are in the least concealed from him; but, whatever we may think of it, or whatever attempts we may make to hide ourselves from him, all persons and things, even the most secret thoughts and desires, hopes and fears, tempers and dispositions of all our hearts, lie open to his accurate inspection, like things that are quite naked and exposed to his eyes, which, for their piercing light and lustre, are as a flame of fire: (Rev. i. 14.) * And as the beasts for sacrifice were flayed, and cut, and laid open, that the priest might narrowly examine, and see whether there were any faults or imperfections in the carcase or its intrails, that would render it unfit to be offered; so all things in, and about us, are most evidently exposed, and clearly manifested, to his critical all-seeing eye, with whom we have the nearest and most important concerns, and have more to do, than with all this world; to whom also we must one day give an exact account of all things done in the body, whether they be good or bad; (2 Cor. v. 10.) and who is the principal subject of our discourse in this epistle. These are awful and affecting thoughts, to engage our utmost circumspection and care, lest any of us fall short of the heavenly rest through unbelief.

14 Seeing then that we have a great

14 But, to return to what has been said about the *priesthood* of Christ, whom we have called the *High Priest*

NOTES.

firmation of it, and in close and natural connection with it, he, who is there called *the Word of God*, is represented as *Omniscient* and *Judge of all*, and therefore undoubtedly capable of exerting all those operations, either in a way of judgment or of mercy; and the last clause of this verse seems to direct our thoughts to him, as it is he with whom we have most immediately to do, for being cast or acquitted in judgment; since the Father judgeth no man immediately and personally, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: Or, as the word (*λογος*) here rendered *have to do*, signifies also *an account*, as it is translated in many places, particularly *Matth. xii. 36.* and *xviii. 23.* *Luke xvi. 2.* *Rom. xiv. 12.* *Phil. iv. 17.* *Heb. xiii. 17.* and *1 Pet. iv. 5.*; and as at other times it signifies *speech* or *discourse*, and is so rendered *John viii. 43.* *Act. xx. 7.* and *1 Cor. ii. 1, 4.* and in almost numberless other places;

so the passages before us (*προς ον μιν ο λογος*) might be translated, *to whom we must give an account*, as the great Judge of all; or, *concerning whom we speak*; (*προς pro πρι*;) compare the *Greek* in *chap. i. 7.* and *v. 11.* all which entirely agrees to our Lord Christ, and points us to him.

* Several critics have observed, that the words (*γυμνα και τετραχλισμια*) here rendered *naked and opened*, allude to the sacrifices under the law, whose carcases were flayed, and hung up naked, to be seen without their skin, and were afterwards laid on their backs, cut open, and cleaved asunder through the neck and back-bone; and so every thing, within and without, was exposed to open view, to be examined with the greatest exactness, for discovering whether there were any blemish or defect in it, or not.

great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

Priest of our profession, (chap. iii. 1. see the note there) We have such a superlative High Priest as, having made atonement for sin by his own blood, is gone into a more glorious and eminent place of God's special residence, than any high priest of old was admitted to in the execution of his office: He is ascended and gone through the aerial *, far above all visible heavens, (Eph. iv. 10.) even to the heaven of heavens, now to appear in the presence of God for us; (chap. ix. 24.) and so he is the great antitype of the priests under the law, who passed through the second vail of the tabernacle and temple, with the blood of sacrifices, into the holy of holies. The great and glorious High Priest I mean, is no less a person than that Jesus, who in his divine nature is by way of peculiarity and eminence the Son of God: We having then such a matchless High Priest, so incomprehensibly great, divine, and excellent, so thoroughly qualified for, and exalted in his office, the most difficult and fundamental part of which he has already performed on earth, and the remainder of which he is now executing in heaven; Let us be hereby encouraged, in the exercise of faith, love, and holy obedience, to maintain a free and open confession of him, and professed subjection to him, as our only Lord and Saviour, with steadfastness, diligence, and perseverance therein, unto the end. And we may depend on seasonable aids and assistances from him to enable us hereunto.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

15 For this great High Priest is as *willing* as he is *able* to compassionate and relieve us under all our trials and difficulties. Though he is gone to heaven, he is not unmindful of us, who are his members upon earth, nor has he laid down his office; but we have him still officiating for us: Nor have we a high priest that is insensible of our wants and weaknesses, miseries and dangers, as if he could not be tenderly, though not grievously, impressed with them; or could not be excited by truly human affections, as far as is consistent with, and suitable to his present state of exaltation, to pity and succour us in the most effectual manner under them, and in due time to deliver us from them: But as, while he was here in the flesh, he himself suffered

NOTE.

* *Passed into the heavens* (εἰσῆλθοντες εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς) properly signifies *passed through the heavens*, and manifestly alludes to the high priest's entering through the second vail into the holy of holies, with the blood of the sacrifices, on the great day of atonement once a year, an account of which we have at

large, Lev. xvi.; and which was typical of our great High Priest's more glorious entrance, once for all, through the visible heavens, with the virtue of his own blood into the most holy place, even into the immediate presence of God in the heaven of heavens, as is evidently represented in this epistle, and particularly chap. ix. 7.—12.

fered by hunger and thirst, weariness and pain, and other natural infirmities of mankind, and by all manner of temptations and persecutions, and inward and outward afflictions and trials, just of the same kind, and in the same manner, as we ourselves now are liable to them; so he experimentally knows what we undergo in our griefs and sorrows; and, remembering his own sufferings, sympathizes with us under ours, as we are *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*: (Eph. v. 30.) And yet (which is more than can be said of any of us, or any former high priest) he bore and went through his own troubles without ever having misbehaved, or committed the least sin, though he was tempted to it; and so he is not only the fitter to be a complete example to us in all that we endure, and to fortify us against all sinful thoughts, words or ways under, and by means of our temptations; but is also the fitter to take away the iniquity that we may fall into by them, since he, having gone through them in such a perfectly holy manner, *needed not, as the high priests under the law, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's*; but all the virtue of his sacrifice was entirely and alone for our sins, which he expiated, once for all, when he offered up himself. (Chap. vii. 27.)

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

16 Let us therefore, in consideration of his most excellent priesthood, which, in consequence of what he had done in a way of atonement on earth, he is carrying on in his intercession for us in heaven, be encouraged to draw near to God * (*προσερχομεθα*) by faith in prayer, and in every other ordinance of gospel-worship, as he is seated not on a throne of justice to execute deserved vengeance upon us; but on a throne of free and condescending grace, to commune with us, and to bless us; which was typified by the mercy-seat under the law, where God dwelt between the cherubim in visible appearances of glory, (*Psal.* lxxx. 1.) and gave forth his orders to the children of Israel. (*Ex.* xxv. 22.) While therefore we think of him, as a sovereign on a throne †, that we may approach

NOTES.

* The throne of grace signifies, not the throne of Christ, as some would suppose; but the throne of God the Father: For Christ is here all along spoken of as our great High Priest, who appears before God the Father on our behalf, to act for us toward him, and to encourage our coming to the throne of grace. Accordingly it is said, that Christ is entered in to heaven itself, now to appear in the

presence of God for us; (chap. ix. 24.) and he is considered in our context, not as the object on the throne, but as the medium of our coming to the throne, as *through him we have access by one Spirit to the Father*, Eph. ii. 18. (See Dr. Owen and Mr. Peirce on the place.)

† God's exercising mercy and grace in Christ may be considered as his being seated on a throne, because he therein appears

approach him with awful reverence and godly fear, in consideration of the infinite distance there is between him and us, Let us, at the same time, realize him as on a *throne of grace*, to embolden a cheerful freedom of access to him by faith; with holy liberty, and humble confidence in him, as our reconciled God and Father, that we may receive (*να λαβωμεν*) all the mercy, for which that throne is prepared, and from which it is dispensed in the forgiveness of sins, and in compassionate relief under all our straits and miseries; and may find favour in God's sight through his Son, together with all the gracious assistances and supplies, in answer to our seeking them, that we need to succour, support, and comfort us, and to perform all things for us, in the most seasonable manner, and at the most seasonable times, in all our wants, distresses, and difficulties of every kind, and particularly in every extraordinary trouble, temptation, and danger, that now attend, or ever may befall us all our lives long, till we get to heaven.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How ancient is the gospel of salvation by Jesus Christ! It has been all along the same, for substance, under various dispensations and different degrees of light, from the fall of *Adam* to New Testament-times: The promise of evangelical and eternal rest, is now set before us with the clearest evidence in the preaching of the gospel; but our hearing it will be of no saving advantage to us, unless it be mixed with faith. How should we therefore dread the thought of taking up with any thing short of an effectual faith, to receive and digest what we hear, lest God should swear in his wrath against us, as he did against the unbelieving *Israelites*, that we shall never enter into his rest! But true believers do, and shall enter into a better rest, than that of the land of *Canaan*; a spiritual rest in this world, and an everlasting rest in heaven, which is a delightful and holy sabbatism founded on Christ's resting from his mediatorial labours and sufferings on earth, when he had finished the work of *redemption*, as the seventh-day-sabbath was founded upon God's having ceased from his *creating* work, when he had finished it.—How efficacious is the written word of God in the hand of Christ, the living and life-giving Word! He sets it home with power and penetration upon the heart, and gives the soul a plain view of itself, either for its reformation and comfort, or its condemnation and confusion. How awful, adoring, and endearing should our thoughts of Christ be! All things are continually and exactly open to his all-seeing eye: As he is God the Word, he narrowly inspects and observes the most secret dispositions and designs of our hearts; and we have the most important of all concerns to transact with him, and must give an account of all that we think, say, or do, to him, as our Judge at the great day. O solemn considerations! But how sweetly are they tempered by believing views of him as the Son of God, our great atoning and interceding High Priest and almighty Saviour! He has been exercised in our nature and world with the very same sort of temptations, inward and outward, as we ourselves are; and he, still remembering what he suffered by them without sin, compassionates us under ours, though, alas! attended with sin! and is gone into

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appears with majesty, royalty, and glory; founded on the *mediation of Christ*, as he is set forth to be a *propitiation*, through erected it, and reigns there, and dispenses all blessings from thence, in a way of *faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 25. and appears there as a righteous advocate mere unmerited favour, to the praise of for us, in the virtue of his propitiation, its own glory; and it is a throne of grace (*1 John ii. 1, 2.*)

into the heaven of heavens, now to appear in the presence of God for us. What an encouragement is this to hold fast our faith in him, and stedfastly abide by our holy profession of his name; and to come with humble boldness and holy freedom of spirit to God, through him, as on a throne of grace, at all times, and especially in the worst of trials, fears, and dangers, for all the seasonable mercy and grace we stand in need of, to forgive our sins, and relieve us under all our troubles.

C H A P. V.

The apostle sets forth the office and duty of a high priest, 1,—4. Shows how abundantly this is answered in Christ's super-eminent call to, and discharge of that office, 5,—10. And reproves the Christian Hebrews for their slothfulness and little progress in the knowledge of the truths of the gospel that were prefigured by the law, 11,—14.

TEXT.

FOR every high priest, taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;

PARAPHRASE.

WE may comfortably hope for all seasonable mercy and help in our applications to a throne of grace, while we think of Jesus the Son of God, as appearing there in the character of our great and sympathizing High Priest to introduce us to it; and we may be sure of his compassion towards us in the execution of his office on our behalf: For even under the legal dispensation, which was typical of the gospel-state, every high priest was singled out, sanctified, and set apart to his office, from among the children of Israel, (Ex. xxviii. 1.) as one partaker of the same human nature with them, that he might be a proper high priest for men, as he was appointed and constituted to represent and transact for men, and might in their name and stead, and for their benefit, present all kind of legal offerings to God for appeasing him on account of their sins, whether they were free-will offerings, or such as were statedly fixed and determined by the law, or whether they were offerings of animate or inanimate things by way of sacrifice: And so he typified Christ our great High Priest, who took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and was in all things made like unto his brethren, that, by a more excellent and truly atoning sacrifice of himself, he might make reconciliation for the sins of his people; (chap. ii. 16, 17.) and that their persons and prayers might be accepted of God, as presented by, and through him.

2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also

2 Every legal high priest is, or ought to be one, who can (*periphrastically*) reasonably bear with, and tenderly pity and condescend to, the frailties and weaknesses of the people for whom he officiates, that he may offer sacrifices for their sins of ignorance, and

is encompassed with
infinity:

may sympathize with; and not be incensed against them; on account of their errors of various kinds, whereby they have strayed from the way of God's commandments into the ways of sin, and from the way of safety or relief into the way of misery and danger; and so are out of the way of truth and holiness, comfort, and happiness: He is qualified for exercising all compassion toward them; because even he himself, (*ipse non absque*) as a man and a sinner, is also attended with the like moral, as well as natural infirmities that they labour under. And the forbearance and compassion of Jesus, our great High Priest, towards ignorant souls and sinners that are gone astray, like lost sheep, is incomparably more excellent and effectual; because he himself has been surrounded with all natural human weaknesses, temptations, and afflictions, though without sin. (*Chap. iv. 15.*)

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sin.

3 And by reason of the sinful, as well as natural infirmities, that always beset or encompassed the legal high priest, it was incumbent upon him, in the discharge of his function, to offer up propitiatory sacrifices, not only for the sins of the people whom he represented, but likewise for his own *personal* sins; (*Lev. iv. 3. and ix. 7. and xvi. 6.*) he as much as they needing an atonement, while they were all, in common, sinners against God: But herein our blessed Lord has infinitely the preference to any former high priest, since he, being sinless, had no occasion to offer any sacrifice for himself, but only for his people, that the whole virtue of it might be placed to their account, and that he might the more feelingly pity them under all their troubles on account of their sins, as remembering what he suffered in making an expiation for them.

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *Aaron*:

4 And it was further necessary, according to the law, that no man whatsoever should of his own head intrude into, or assume to himself the high honour and dignity of the priesthood, for attempting which *Uzziah*, tho' a king, was severely rebuked and punished: (*2 Chron. xxvi. 16.*) But he only was to be advanced to that sacred office, whom God called and authorized, by special order and immediate appointment, to be invested with, and to execute it, as he did *Aaron* and his sons at the first setting up of the Levitical priesthood. (*Ex. xxviii. 1. and 1 Chron. xxiii. 15.*)

5 So also Christ glorified not himself, to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son,

5 So, in like manner, our Lord Jesus, the anointed Saviour, did not in his incarnate state raise himself up, by any private act of his own, to the honour of the gospel high priesthood, any more than *Aaron* did to that which he was advanced to; but he was eternally

Son, to-day have I begotten thee.

1. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; by which he intimated * both the dignity of his person as his eternal Son, and the excellency and authority of his priestly office, as both should be demonstrated and owned of God the Father by his resurrection from the dead, in consequence of his having fully satisfied divine justice by that one offering of himself in his death, whereby he perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Chap. x. 14.)

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

6 And we have a still more express testimony to Christ's priesthood, in Ps. cx. 4. where God the Father said to his Son, Thou art and shalt be an eternal High Priest, not after the order of Aaron, whose priesthood ran in a continual line of succession, from age to age, in his family; but after the superior order of the renowned Melchisedec, (see the notes on ver. 10.) who had no predecessor or successor in his office, which was confined to himself alone; and so was the more eminent and lively type of the priesthood of Christ, as that was to abide in his own person alone and for ever, without any one's preceding, or following him; or sharing with him in the dignity and work of his priesthood; but was to manage all the high affairs and concerns of it wholly and alone by himself.

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and

7 Who while he was here upon earth, clothed with flesh and blood, and all the finless frailties and infirmities of human nature, and liable to all sorts of calamities; and who, in the sufferings he endured under a sense of divine wrath, which he was to bear for our

nally appointed, and in due time solemnly called to, qualified for, and actually invested with this glorious office, which was an honour conferred upon him, as man, (see the note on ver. 8.) by the immediate designation of God the Father himself, who, as is testified, (Ps. ii. 7.) said to him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; by which he intimated * both the dignity of his person as his eternal Son, and the excellency and authority of his priestly office, as both should be demonstrated and owned of God the Father by his resurrection from the dead, in consequence of his having fully satisfied divine justice by that one offering of himself in his death, whereby he perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Chap. x. 14.)

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7 Who while he was here upon earth, clothed with flesh and blood, and all the finless frailties and infirmities of human nature, and liable to all sorts of calamities; and who, in the sufferings he endured under a sense of divine wrath, which he was to bear for our

NOTE.

* To suppose, with some, that the passage here quoted from Psal. ii. 7. *Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee*, refers, not to the divine nature, but merely to the priestly office of Christ, seems utterly inconsistent with ver. 8. where it is said, *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*. And though Christ's priesthood, as well as Sonship, was solemnly declared by his resurrection from the dead, I can by no means think, with others, that he was not an High Priest, or did not perform any part of his priestly office upon earth; or that it commenced after his resurrection and ascension to heaven: For offering sacrifice was a principal part of the priest's office; and Christ's death is frequently spoken of throughout this epistle as a sacrifice, which necessarily supposes him to be a Priest before he offered it; since all the typical priests were actually invested in their office, before they could offer any sacrifice under the law; and this we are told our Lord did, when through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God; and once in the end of the world appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and so was offered to bear the sins of many. (Chap. ix. 14, 26, 28.)

and tears, unto him that was able to live him from death, and was heard, in that he feared;

our sins in the discharge of his priestly office, was sore amazed, and exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him, when, together with the offering of himself, he presented his earnest addresses in the most fervent, humble, and pathetic manner, yea, even with a loud cry, and weeping petitions and entreaties unto God his Father, who (if he pleased) could have delivered him from the terrors of the death which lay before him. (See *Mark* xiv. 33,—36. and xv. 34.) And he was heard, so as to be accepted in his prayer; and was answered, tho' not by a prevention of his sufferings and death themselves; (which he knew would be so extremely agonizing that human nature, as such, could not but be sorely afraid of them) yet as to the main intention of his importunate prayer, in the seasonable assistances that were afforded him; in the composure of his human passions; in his resurrection, and victory over death; and in his obtaining all the desired ends of his sufferings, for the glory of God, and the redemption of the church: And he was thus heard, because of his holy reverence (*ευλαβείας*) of his heavenly Father.

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered:

8 Though he was the eternal Son of God, the same in nature and perfections with the Father, and infinitely dear to him*, who called him to be an High Priest; yet having assumed human nature, that he might therein execute his priestly office, as his Father's Servant, such was his zeal for glorifying him, and his love to the church, that he submitted, with an exercise of faith, patience, self-denial, resignation, and all humility and readiness of mind and heart, practically to learn what it is to be obedient, and how good it is to be so, to his Father's will and command, even unto the death of the cross; (*John* x. 18. and *Phil.* ii. 7, 8.) yea, he condescended to learn, by severe experience, what terrible difficulties and distresses, and yet what rich advantages, attended his obedience all his life long, and especially when he came to die, by his enduring all those things, which he was called to suffer in making atonement for sin: He also hereby experimentally learned the trials and difficulties of the obedience, which his people are called to, that he might the better sympathize with, and succour them. (*Chap.* iv. 15.)

9 And,

N O T E.

* This passage, as appears to me, stands in a beautiful opposition to *ver.* 5. There, considering Christ as man, his priestly office is spoken of as an honour conferred upon him; but here, consider-

ing him as the Son of God, it is rather spoken of as a condescension in him to engage in it, and go through the services and sufferings he was called to thereby.

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

9 And, having completed his obedience and suffering unto death, and being thereupon fully consecrated to the whole of his priesthood for making intercession, in virtue of his sacrifice, (*chap. ii. 10.* see the notes there, and on *John xvii. 17.*) he became the procuring and efficient cause (*causa*) of salvation, as he purchased it by his blood, in the virtue of which he secures it by his advocacy, and actually gives it by his Spirit and grace: And the salvation which he is the author of, is not such a temporal deliverance from evil, as *Israel* had out of *Egypt*, or as the people of the *Jews* had from temporal punishments by their legal offerings, or as many believers shall have from the common destruction that is coming upon *Jerusalem*; but a salvation of an infinitely more excellent and durable nature, even a spiritual, complete, and everlasting salvation, inclusive of a deliverance from all evil, and of all the blessings of grace and glory, to all and every one of them, and of them only, that diligently hearken, and yield themselves up to him, as the Captain of their salvation, (*chap. ii. 10.*) for all holiness, as well as happiness, by the obedience of faith. (*Rom. xvi. 26.*)

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

10 Even to him who is named of God in an extraordinary manner, * as he styled him an High Priest, not after the common way and course of *Aaron* and his sons, according to the law, in which there was a succession of priests of the same order; but according to the more eminent manner, in which, † *Melchisedec* was called the priest of the most high God; there being the greatest resemblance between the

NOTES.

* Here the apostle refers to what he had said, *ver. 6.* about Christ's being a priest for ever after the order of *Melchisedec*; but expresses his being called of God by a very different word in the Greek, (*καταρτισθης*) from that which is also rendered called (*καταρτισθης*) of God, as was *Aaron*: (*ver. 4.*) There it relates to his being invested with his office; but here it relates to the denomination which God gave him as so invested, namely, that of an high priest after the order of *Melchisedec*.

† Who this *Melchisedec* was must needs be very uncertain, since the Holy Ghost himself seems to have concealed it on purpose, that he might be a more eminent type of Christ, as he was some unknown king and priest of *Salem* or *Jerusalem*, who appeared in a superior character to *Abraham*, *Gen. xiv. 18.*—20. And though our apostle says in the

next verse, that he had many things to say of him, and hard to be uttered, and goes largely into the consideration of him, *chap. vii.*; yet he no where tells us who he was, which we may reasonably suppose he would have done, had God revealed it to him; and if he did not know this, it is too curious and vain for us to pretend to determine it: And therefore I rather choose to leave the matter, as designed to be concealed from us, than to offer conjectures about it, as some have done, who, among other guesses, incline to think that it was the Son of God himself, while to others it appears very improbable that he should be a type of himself, who is spoken of as another Priest after the order of *Melchisedec*, and after the similitude of *Melchisedec*, (*chap. vii. 11, 15.*) which naturally supposes them to be different persons.

* The course of Christ to an occasion with important series of the first attention

the priesthood of that extraordinary man and of our Lord Jesus, as may be shewn hereafter. (*Chap. vii.*)

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered; seeing ye are dull of hearing.

11 Concerning which *Melchisedec**, as he was a type of Christ in his *kingly*, and especially in his *priestly* office, we, Christ's ministering servants, have many important things to deliver; things which are difficult to be explained, so as to convey familiar and exact ideas of them to your minds, and are *hard to be understood by you*, (*δυσωστα* 2 Pet. iii. 16.) not merely from the sublimity of the subject, or from my manner of representing it, but chiefly from your own indisposition to receive it; because many of you, at least, who have been too apt to stick to the letter of the law, and are too slothful (*νωδργοι*) to inquire carefully into the gospel revelation, are very backward to attend to, and receive what I have to offer about it.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

12 For when, considering your long standing in Christ's school, and the clearness of the gospel-revelation, and the advantages for instruction which have often been afforded you, (*chap. ii. 1,—3. and vi. 7.*) ye ought to have made such proficiency in the knowledge of Christ, as to be yourselves capable of, and to have engaged, some in privately, and some in publicly instructing others about the great doctrines of the gospel; ye, on the other hand, have made such little progress in knowledge, that, instead of being teachers of others, ye stand in need of one to instruct you over again into the nature of the very first rudiments, grounds, and principles of the Christian faith, that were shadowed out in the sacred writings of the *Old Testament*, and are more clearly revealed in the *New*, both of which, being delivered under divine inspiration, are to be esteemed (what they are in truth) the infallible dictates or sayings of God himself: And so exceedingly dull of hearing are some of you, as to have rather *declined*, than *grown* in the knowledge of spiritual things; inso-much that ye appear to be so weak and low in your relish and conceptions of them, as to need to be led into those plainest and most familiar articles of Christianity, which (to borrow an allusion to corporal things) may be compared to milk, that is of easy digestion;

N O T E

* The apostle defers his designed discourse about *Melchisedec* as a type of Christ to *chap. vii.* that he might take an occasion from this hint to deal closely with the *Hebrews* in a needful and important digression in the remaining series of this chapter, and to the end of the *sixth*, about their stupidity and inattention, and consequently their small

proficiency in the knowledge of such things as they might reasonably have been expected to have attained to in a greater degree than they had, considering the length of their standing in Christianity, and the light which was cast by the gospel on *Jewish* ordinances.

gestion; instead of being taught the higher truths of the gospel, in the accomplishment of ancient types of the person and offices of Christ, which may be compared to such strong meat as is of harder digestion.

13 For every one that useth milk, is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

13 For every one, whose spiritual constitution and attainments are so weak and child-like, that he has no appetite for, nor can take in and digest, any thing but the very first principles of the doctrine of Christ, (*chap. vi. 1.*) which are like milk for babes; whatever general notions he may have, he is like an unexperienced person, (*απυρος*) and is inexpert at understanding, receiving, and improving the great truths of the gospel, in which the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, (*Rom. i. 17.*) and Christ is said to be the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes; (*Rom. x. 4.*) and in which we are taught to live in the practice of righteousness: (*Tit. ii. 11, 12.*) For he that can only entertain, and profit by the easiest and most familiar principles of Christian religion, appears to be no better than a babe in his knowledge and improvement of the gospel.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

14 But the sublimer doctrines, which may be compared to strong meat, are most fit and proper for, and suited to the nourishment of, those believers, who, like men grown up to maturity, are far advanced in the knowledge of the doctrines of Christ; (see the note on *1 Cor. ii. 6.*) and so, compared with babes, may be styled perfect; (*τελειων*) even such as by means of an experimental acquaintance with these divine things, according to the gospel-discovery of them, and by long custom and habits of conversing with them, which they have attained, under divine influence, by reading, hearing, meditation, and prayer, have their spiritual senses understandingly and feelingly employed and improved, to discern and distinguish between what is good or bad, true or false, pernicious or beneficial, detracting from, or perfective of, the gospel scheme; and know how to refuse the one, and embrace the other.

RECOLUTIONS.

Behold the incomparable excellence and affecting endearments of Christ's priesthood! He, being as truly man, as God, has a more tender and effectual compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way, than any of the ancient priests could have, who were beset with the same *sinful*, as well as *natural* infirmities, with them; and therefore were obliged to offer sacrifices for themselves, as well as for the people: But as our *sinless* High Priest suffered in the days of his humiliation, to the greatest extremity, for the sins of his people, he cannot but sympathize with them. With what fervency did he, in the most religious and submissive manner, apply to his heavenly Father for seasonable relief against those troubles that could not but be very terrible to human nature; and how fully was he answered, with respect to the grand design of his prayer! As he was perfectly

fully fitted by his sufferings for completing his priestly office, he is become the author of eternal salvation to all that yield themselves up by faith and holy obedience to him. How great is the honour that was put upon him, as *man*; and his own condescension, as *God*, in bearing this important office! He did not thrust himself into it; but it was conferred upon him by the express and immediate call of God his Father, as the *Levitical* priesthood was upon *Aaron*; and it is manifest what a divine and glorious High Priest he is, in that his Father said to him, *Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee, and thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*. Though he was the eternal Son of God, yet, adorably condescension! how freely did he accept the call to office-work, and experimentally learn obedience by his sufferings unto death! But, alas, how often are professing believers themselves too little apprehensive of the glories of Christ, as shadowed out by *Melchisedec* in various instances, and of the doctrine of righteousness through him! They are apt to be so slothful and inattentive to them, that they cannot take in just sentiments of them; but when for their standing and advantages in the church, they might reasonably be expected to have such a stock of scriptural knowledge, as to be able to instruct others, they themselves need to be taught over again the very first principles of Christianity. But, blessed be God, there are provisions of all sorts in his word for every state and condition of his people; there is milk for babes, and strong meat for those that are arrived at a state of manhood in Christ, and are more skilful in the word of righteousness, as by means of frequent use, and great experience, they are confirmed in habits of knowledge and grace, and have their spiritual senses exercised to discern the difference between what is good and bad, and to relish the one and refuse the other. How should this consideration excite us to the greatest diligence, that we may not always be like children in understanding, but may live upon such sublime truths of the gospel as are suited to the nourishment of strong men in Christ!

C H A P. VI.

The apostle intimates his design of giving the Hebrews higher instructions, and excites them to greater proficiency, than they had yet made in the doctrine of Christ, 1,—3. To enforce this upon them, he describes the dreadful nature and consequence of apostacy in the most moving strains, 4,—8. Sweetly insinuates his great satisfaction, as to the better part of them, notwithstanding what he had been saying about apostates, 9, 10. And encourages them to perseverance in faith and holiness, from the experience of other sincere believers, and from the promise and oath of God to Abraham, and to all the heirs of salvation, 11,—20.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God,

SINCE it is unworthy the character of Christians to be always children, instead of men in understanding, (*chap. v. 11,—14.*) let us therefore dismiss, for the present, what relates to the first principles of Christianity, without insinuating particularly upon them, which, how important soever they be, are like milk for babes; (*chap. v. 12, 13.*) and let us proceed to discourse of, and to embrace with holy care and diligence, those great mysteries of the gospel, that may bring us to more advanced degrees of spiritual understanding, such as are like *strong meat*, fit for those that are of full age, (*chap. v. 14.*) and, compara-

tively speaking, may be called a perfection in the knowledge of the sublimer points of faith, relating to the person and offices, and particularly to the *priesthood of Christ, 'till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, and unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* (Ephes. iv. 13.) I therefore decline insisting on *first principles*, that we who preach, and ye who hear, may not always be laying the foundation, and stop there, without building upon it: The *principles* I mean are such as these*: One is the doctrine of *evangelical repentance*, which consists in a thorough sense of the evil of sin, as committed against God; in deep humiliation and grief of soul for it, and utter detestation of it; and, under apprehensions of the mercy of God through Christ, in turning to him from all iniquities, which may be called dead works, as they are practised

N O T E.

* It is extremely difficult, and expositors are much at a loss, to determine the sense of this and the following articles, to the end of the second verse, which are here called *the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and the foundation of repentance*, &c. Some understand them to mean *the first principles of Christianity*; and others, the principles of *Judaism*, as contained in the doctrine of the Old Testament, and particularly of the ceremonial law, which gave a shadowy representation of Christ, and laid a foundation for the fuller discoveries that were to be made of him under the gospel-dispensation. But, after the closest inquiry, I have been able to make, they that go into the *last* of these ways of interpreting all these passages appear to me, either to put too great a force upon *some* of them; or else to make some too *co-incidental* with others of them; and they that choose the *first* way of interpreting them seem to be exceedingly puzzled how to account for the *doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands*, as belonging to the *first principles* of Christianity. And I own, that I cannot meet with satisfaction from any author, in either of these ways of interpretation; because each side is apparently pressed with great, and to me insuperable difficulties, in their respective ways of accounting for all the particulars here mentioned, which may be seen in *Pool's Synopsis*, *Grotius*, *Owen*, *Hammond*, *Peirce*, and others; and which rather bewilder than

instruct me. But, in my humble opinion, we may avoid many difficulties, and steer a much clearer course between the two former, if we consider the *doctrine of baptisms, and laying on of hands*, as a parenthesis, referring to *Jewish washings, and laying hands on the heads of their sacrifices*, the doctrines of which rites were, *Repentance from dead works, and faith toward God*; and if we consider *repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment*, as the first rudiments of *Christianity*; and so the *Jewish washings, and laying on of hands*, are to be considered, not as distinct principles from the rest; but as significative, under the *Mosaic law*, of the *repentance and faith* just before mentioned. Accordingly, it is to be observed, that though the doctrines of *repentance and faith* are intended, yet the word *doctrine* is not prefixed to them in the Greek, but only to *baptisms, and laying on of hands*, which leads us to think that they were the doctrines taught by those ceremonies; and then the principles themselves will not be *six*, as they are commonly reckoned, but only *four*, which are very properly specified as plain and fundamental principles of Christian religion. This, if I am not much mistaken, gives us a more easy and consistent view of these verses, than any thing that has occurred to me, either in reading or meditating upon them.

sed by those that are dead in trespasses and sins, and as they deserve, tend to, and entail, not only temporal death, but also the destruction of the souls of those that are under their guilt and power, and will certainly issue in it, (which is the second death) unless repented of and graciously pardoned. And another of these principles is the doctrine of *faith* towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and toward God through him, (*Acts* xx. 21.) which is inseparably connected with true repentance, and consists in a firm belief of God's being and perfections, and in an humble trust in him, according to gospel discoveries of divine grace for the remission of sins, through Jesus Christ, as an accomplishment of ancient promises, types, and predictions of him.

1. Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

2 (These two principles of Christianity were signified by various *washings* under the ceremonial law, (*chap.* ix. 10.) which held forth the doctrine of purification, and were prefigurative of the cleansing virtue of the blood and Spirit of Christ; and were further signified by the laying of the *bands* of the representatives of the people on the heads of the sacrifices, and particularly in the great day of atonement, (*Lev.* xvi. 21, 22, 29, 30.) which was attended with penitent confessions of sin, and directed the faith of *Israel* to the truly proper and effectually atoning sacrifice of Jesus our High Priest :) And besides these, there are *two other* first principles, that are motives to this faith and repentance, namely, the fundamental doctrine of *the resurrection* of the bodies both of the righteous and the wicked, *one to everlasting life, and the other to shame and everlasting contempt*, (*Daniel* xii. 2.) which is fully confirmed, and further cleared up by the gospel revelation, in which our Lord himself has plainly told us, *All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation*: (*John* v. 28, 29.) And this leads us to the great article of the awful and *final judgment*, that shall ensue upon the resurrection of all mankind, who must *appear before the judgment-seat of Christ*, (*Rom.* xiv. 10, 11. and 2 *Cor.* v. 10.) and that will determine their state of happiness or misery for all eternity,* *as the wicked shall go away into*

NOTE.

* Though the judgment itself will be dispatched in a certain limit of time, it may be called *eternal judgment*, with respect to its being irreversibly decisive without appeal, and to its eternal ef-

fects, as Christ is said to have obtained *eternal redemption for us*, though the price of it was paid at once, *when he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*. (*Chap.* ix. 12, 26.)

into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal. (Mat. xxv. 34, 46.)

3 And as ye have been sufficiently taught these important doctrines, and ought never to forget them, but seriously reflect upon them all your days, and will do so, unless it be your own fault through stupidity and sloth, (chap. v. 11.) I shall pass them by, and pursue my design of leading you hereafter, (chap. vii.) to the still sublimer parts of the gospel, relating to Christ and his priesthood, to prevent your apostatizing from him, if God shall favour me with the continuance of life, (James iv. 15.) and of gracious assistances, and shall give me opportunity of transmitting this epistle before it be too late: And should it be too late for any of you, dreadful would your case be indeed.

4 For it is impossible for those who

4 For the state of those professors of Christianity, that turn utter apostates *, is really desperate, past all hope

N O T E.

* Various are the sentiments of expositors on the descriptive characters of the persons intended in this and the next verse; and it is not very easy to keep the ideas distinct that are designed to be conveyed, particularly, by their having *tasted the heavenly gift, been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and the powers of the world to come.* But as I take them all to relate to the extraordinary dispensation, and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost in the apostle's days, I have endeavoured to give such an account of them as I apprehend to be most probable, and least interfering one with another. And that none of them signify any special and saving operation of the Spirit, is very evident to me; because here is no mention made of *faith, love, or any other grace*; nor of *holiness or obedience*; nor of any of the *blessings of salvation*; and the apostle seems carefully to keep to the word *tasting*, to express what experience they had of the gospel, and of the dispensation, gifts, and powers of the Holy Ghost, to intimate that they had so much knowledge and taste of those things as was sufficient to enable them to make a fair trial of them, though they did not so far relish and approve of them, upon the trial, as cordially to receive, and feed by faith upon them, and digest them to their spiritual nourishment; but were, after all, like barren ground, on which the rain often comes, and yet bears nothing but *briars and thorns*, in distinction from that good

ground, which brings forth herbs, ver. 7, 8.; and true believers are distinguished from them, as persons of whom the apostle was persuaded better things, even things that accompany salvation, and whom he describes by their *work and labour of love*, which God, in his righteousness, or faithfulness to his covenant, would not forget, ver. 9, 10.; and he speaks of the immutability of his counsel, with regard to their salvation, ver. 17, 18, 19. So that there can be no argument drawn from hence for falling from grace; there being no appearance of any one special grace in these persons: Nor is there any ground for the distress that many gracious souls have been thrown into, from a misunderstanding of these passages, as if, on account of their backslidings and lesser falls into one or another sin, it were impossible for them to be renewed to repentance: For the apostle here speaks of only utter apostates, that never had the truth of grace in their own souls, and fell away from the profession of Christianity after they had entered upon it, and had received the greatest advantages in the nature of means that could be imagined, or ever should be afforded, even by miraculous operations of the Spirit, to engage them to continue steadfast in it; and so they seem to have approached very near to, if not been actually guilty of the *sin against the Holy Ghost.* (See the notes on Mat. xii. 31 and 1 John v. 18.)

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who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

hope of their ever being reclaimed by any means whatsoever, who have been once so far illuminated in their minds*, by the preaching of the gospel, and the common, or, at most, miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit, as doctrinally to receive the knowledge of the truth; (chap. x. 26.) and that have made some experiment, and had some relish of the dispensation of grace, set up by the gospel, under the conduct and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who is by way of eminence *the gift of God*, and that with a particular regard to his miraculous operations, (Acts viii. 20.) and is sent down from heaven by the exalted Head and Saviour; (Acts ii. 33. and 1 Pet. i. 12.) and have been made partakers of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as *prophecy, discerning of spirits, several kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues*; (1 Cor. xii. 10.)

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;

And have seen such divine credentials of the word of God, as carried conviction to their consciences of its truth and goodness, and gave them some taste of its excellency, which struck their affections with such a sort of pleasure, as our Lord describes in the *stony ground bearers, that received the good seed of the word with joy for a while, but had no root in themselves*; (Mat. xiii. 20, 21.) or as those felt that attended on John the Baptist's ministry, who *for a season rejoiced in his light*; (John v. 35.) and have tasted the wonderful powers that were exerted in producing other miracles, over and above, and as distinguished from, the forementioned gifts of the Holy Ghost, (see the note on 1 Cor. xii. 10.) such as healing the sick, and raising the dead, that were wrought in confirmation of the gospel, which, as the last dispensation that was to succeed those that were before the law, and under the law, has been usually called by the Jews, and has been already spoken of in this epistle, as *the world to come*. (Chap. ii. 5.)

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing

If such as these shall sin wilfully, (chap. x. 26.) so as to apostatize from Christ to *Moses*, and from the profession of the gospel to *Judaism*, they resolutely reject the only remedy for their recovery; and are so

N O T E.

* Some suppose that as the word, (*ἐπιδιδόναι*) here rendered *enlightened*, was often used by the ancients with relation to baptism, the apostle means them that had been baptised. But it does not appear that this word was ever used in that mystical sense, until the second or third century by Justin Martyr. (dial. II.) and Clemens Alexandrinus, (lib. i. cap. 6.) nor do we find any

such signification of it in all the New Testament, where it constantly relates to the light or knowledge whereby the mind is enlightened; and particularly in that parallel place, where the apostle speaks of these *Hebrews having been illuminated*, as a term of the same import with their *having received the knowledge of the truth*. (Chap. x. 26, 31.)

seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

so righteously given up of God to a desperate and voluntarily contracted blindness and hardness of their own hearts, that there is no room left for any expectation of the least possibility, by any means whatsoever, of their being so effectually renewed and changed in the temper of their minds and hearts, as to recover them to a just sense of their crimes, and sincere repentance to the saving of their souls; because they, in effect, approve of the wickedness of the Jews in crucifying the eternal Son of God, and shew that they themselves would put him to the ignominious and painful death of the cross over again, as an impostor, had they opportunity for it; they also persecute him again in his members; and they expose his character to the vilest reproach, by renouncing him and their profession of him, as though he really had been as infamous a person as his crucifiers pretended, and were not fit to be trusted in, adhered to, or acknowledged as a divine person, or as the true Messiah; and as though, after trial, they had found that there is neither truth nor goodness in him, or in his gospel; and so they most perversely shut themselves out from all the benefit of his crucifixion, and cause his glorious name to be blasphemed in the world.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

7 For, to show the difference between true believers and those that are only partakers of the illuminations and miraculous operations of the Spirit, by a similitude taken from a fruitful and barren soil, true believers are like *good ground*, (Mat. xiii. 23.) which receives good seed, and is soaked with, and drinks in the rain that often descends upon it in seasonable showers, as the word, ordinances, and influences of the Spirit do upon the hearts of believers, to make them fruitful: And as, in consequence hereof, this sort of earth, being thus kindly impregnated, (*καρπύουσα*) brings forth grass and corn, flowers, and all useful herbs, that are pleasing and profitable to those, by and for whom it is tilled and cultivated, it is evidently blessed of God, as the author of all its increase, and he will still further command the blessing upon it, even as he did upon the whole earth in its original state; (*Gen. i. 11, 29.*) so true believers, being renewed by grace, bring forth fruits of righteousness, that are by Jesus Christ acceptable to God, and for his praise and glory, (*Phil. i. 11.*) and are manifestly under his special blessing, who gives their increase; (*1 Cor. iii. 7.*) and he will further own and bless them, that they may bring forth more fruits of faith, love, holiness, and obedience, yea, all the fruits of the Spirit, in their hearts and lives; and will preserve them to his heavenly kingdom; and so command the blessing

ing upon them, *even life for evermore.* (Psal. cxxxiii. 3.)

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is high unto cursing; whose end it is to be burned.

8 But, on the contrary, those professors of Christ, that partake only of the forementioned illuminations, external means and advantages, without the truth of grace in their hearts, naturally produce nothing but unbelief, impenitence, and hardness of heart, and every kind of unfruitful work of darkness; and so are like the ground, which God cursed after, and on account of the fall of man; (*Gen. iii. 17, 18.*) and which, notwithstanding all the rain that falls upon it, brings forth, instead of pleasant and useful fruit, nothing but briers and thorns, which are offensive, unprofitable, and injurious to the owner, and therefore, upon trial, is (*αδοξικος*) disapproved of by him that manures it, even as those grievous revolters were by the Lord, who spoke of them as *reprobate silver, because he had rejected them*: (*Jer. vi. 19, 30.*) And all such barren apostate professors are in the nearest danger of falling under an execution of the curse of God upon them; and their final issue is to be burned up, like briers and thorns, (*H. xxvii. 4.*) and like chaff, when separated from the wheat, with unquenchable fire, (*Mal. iii. 12.*) to their eternal destruction, as this earth itself shall be at the last day. (*2 Pet. iii. 10.*)

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

9 But as to the better part of you, my dear brethren, whom I look upon and love, as beloved of God, and as sincere believers, I am very confident, that ye are favoured with much more excellent blessings than the apostates before mentioned ever have been partakers of; and that your end shall be better than theirs, (*ver. 7, 8.*) as ye are enriched with the blessings of special grace, in the renovation of your nature, the forgiveness of sins, justification and adoption, with other distinguishing benefits, that contain in them, stand connected with, and shall certainly issue in the eternal salvation of your souls; (*εξουσιαν σωτηριας*) though for your caution, and for the terror of false professors, I have spoke so freely of the danger of apostatizing from the profession of Christ, after an enjoyment of such high privileges as have been conferred upon them, according to what has been said about them. (*ver. 4, 5.*)

10 For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love, which

10 This my firm persuasion concerning you is built upon the most solid grounds: It rests upon the stability of the covenant of grace, (*ver. 17, 18.*) and the evident tokens of your saving interest in it: For as God is truth itself, we may depend upon it, that he

which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

neither is nor ever will be * *unfaithful* to his own *everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things, and sure*; (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) or that, in violation of his promises of gracious rewards, any more than in unrighteousness to the merit of his Son, He will be unmindful of your *work of faith, and labour of love*, (1 Thess. i. 3.) or of that effectual and operative faith, which he has wrought in you, and which hath produced a sincere and laborious love, as the principle of all holy obedience, according to what ye have abundantly manifested in your religious regard to his great and blessed name; in your reverential subjection to his authority and commands; and in your serious concern for his honour and glory, in that, as in many other instances, so particularly in these days of peril and reproach, ye have cheerfully and diligently attended to the various duties of compassion, tenderness and assistance, counsel and liberality, to his poor, despised, and afflicted saints for his sake; and still persist in all the offices of love and kindness to them, on account of their peculiar relation, and holy conformity to him, as they bear his name and image.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

11 But, (δε) knowing that *end* and *means* are connected in his gracious settlement, I cannot but earnestly desire, beg of God, and entreat you to labour in his strength, that, not only some, but all and every one of you may manifestly abound, and persevere in the same diligent care, study, and endeavour, as many of you have already shown, in bringing forth the genuine fruits of faith and love; and that ye may do this constantly, with growing improvement, till by these means, and the blessing of God upon them, ye, like a ship that is carried to its port with full sails, (πληροπορία) shall arrive at the fullest satisfaction, as to your own hope of interest in Christ, and in the promises of eternal life, that it is well grounded, and shall never be disappointed; and till ye shall have this abundant assurance of faith and hope, not only now and then, but with continuance through all your days and Christian course upon earth, at the close of which ye shall *receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls*. (1 Pet. i. 9.)

12 In

NOTE.

* *Unrighteous* (ἀδίκος) sometimes signifies *unfaithful*, and is used in opposition to *faithful* (πίστος) Luke xvi. 10. and *unrighteousness* stands opposed to *truth*, Rom. ii. 8.; and this is the sense in which it seems to be most immediately intend-

ed here, with reference to the *faithfulness of God* in fulfilling his new-covenant promises: And yet he may be said to be therein *just* to the merit of his Son too, as the promised blessings are the purchase of his blood, Rom. iii. 25, 26.

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12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

12 In order hereunto, my heart's desire and prayer is, that ye may not indulge to ease and sloth, by being careless, indolent, or negligent in the use of the means of grace, or in fulfilling the duties of your holy profession; but may be imitators, (*μιμηται*) and so tread in the steps of those believers in this and the former ages that have gone before you*; and may make the best of your way after them; ye having as much encouragement hereunto, as they themselves had, who through faith in the promises, and through a patient expectation of their accomplishment in due season, and who possessing their own souls with patience in the mean while, under their various trials, are now got beyond the reach of all troubles and danger, and are in possession of the heavenly inheritance, which God had promised them, and which ye in the same way shall, through grace, be likewise made partakers of.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

13 And, for the further encouragement of your hope, and perseverance in faith and patience to the end, ye ought to consider how punctually faithful and true God is in performing his promises, and how graciously he has condescended to give us the utmost assurance of it: For to instance in the great leading promise, on the fulfilling of which all the rest of the promised blessings of the new covenant depend, When God was pleased to give *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, the vastly important promise of an innumerable offspring, from which the Messiah himself should descend, in whom all nations of the

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N O T E

* By them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises is generally understood to be meant the Patriarchs of old, that inherit eternal life: But as it is said of them, chap. xi. 13. these all died in faith, not having received the promises, others have thought that the Gentiles, who had already believed, and were partakers of the promises, are here intended. (See Mr. Peirce on the place.) However, I think that passage may be easily understood in a light, very consistent with a supposition, that the Patriarchs are here referred to: For though they did not actually receive the accomplishment of the promises of the Messiah, and the blessings of the gospel-state upon earth, which are there referred to, they did receive the promises of the eternal inheritance in heaven, which seem to be here most immediately intended, as the upshot of all the promises of the covenant of grace: And therefore, if the

apostle had any view to the believing Gentiles, there is no need to consider it as exclusive of the believing Patriarchs: And inheriting the promises, signifies actually possessing the things promised; for though faith was necessary to the Gentiles inheriting the promised blessings of the gospel-state, as the blessing of *Abraham* came upon them through Jesus Christ, and they received the promise of the Spirit through faith; (*Gal. iii. 14.*) yet Christian patience must be supposed rather to follow after their possession of these, than to go before it: Accordingly, both faith and patience are usually spoken of in scripture, as preceding, and as the means of persons arriving at, the heavenly inheritance, as in chap. x. 36. 37. 38. and xii. 1. 2. and 2 *Thess. iii. 5.* *James i. 3. 4. 12.* and v. 7. 8. and 1 *Pet. v. 9.* and in our context, ver. 15. it is said, that, after *Abraham* had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

earth should be blessed, (Gen. xxii. 16, 17.) he confirmed it by an oath, (ver. 17.) to give him the strongest evidence that it should certainly take effect; and because there was no God above him, or no being superior to himself, to whom he could appeal for the truth of what he said, as we do to *him* in our solemn oaths, as to one infinitely greater than ourselves, he appealed to his own being and perfections, and as it were pawned them for the truth and performance of his promise, inasmuch that he would as soon cease to be, as break it.

14 Saying, Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

14 Saying, I will abundantly and certainly bless thee, as with a rich variety of the good things of this life, so especially with an innumerable posterity, like the stars of heaven, and the sand on the sea-shore for multitude; and one of thy descendents shall be the Messiah himself, in whom not only thy natural offspring among the *Jews*, but *Gentiles* also in every nation of the world, even all thy spiritual children of both sorts, that walk in the steps of thy faith, shall be blessed with all spiritual and heavenly blessings. (Gen. xxii. 16,—18.)

15 And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

15 And accordingly, after *Abraham* had waited with patience and hope, under the many trials of his faith that he was exercised with, God fulfilled this eminent promise in blessing him, not only with great prosperity in worldly affairs, but more especially in giving him a son, and multiplying his children while he lived; and so he enjoyed the promised blessing in them, as a pledge and earnest of all the rest that were to be brought in by his most glorious descendent, the Messiah himself, *whose day he saw* with an eye of faith, *and was glad*; (John viii. 56.) and when he came to die, he himself, through faith in the great promised seed, obtained the inheritance of eternal life, (Luke xvi. 23.) which is the final issue and consummation of all the promises, and which shall be likewise enjoyed by all his spiritual seed, through the righteousness of faith, (Rom. iv. 13, 16. and Gal. iii. 18, 22.) after they, like him, shall have run with patience the race which is set before them, looking to Jesus, &c. (Chap. xii. 1, 2.) In this condescending manner, God was pleased to give the fullest assurance possible of his veracity, according to the most valid and approved method, that men use to take to satisfy their fellow-creatures of the truth of what they affirm and promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation

16 For it is customary with men, on important occasions, to bind their depositions and promises with an oath; and they indeed (*μὴν*) as is fit in the nature of things, and is ordered by a divine command, (Deut.

tion is to them an end of all strife.

(Deut. vi. 13.) swear by the supreme God, who is infinitely greater than themselves, to give the utmost solemnity and sanction to their oath*: And such sort of swearing, to confirm the truth of what they say, is commonly and justly reckoned by men the strongest, and most decisive evidence, that can be given of the truth of their declarations, to the satisfying of all doubts, determining all debates, and silencing all contradiction, to the testimony given, or to the testifier.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

17 In this strongest way therefore, that men can take to put an end to all doubts and controversies, the great God has stooped to accommodate himself to the weakness of men, as being graciously inclined and resolved to give them the utmost satisfaction, with still more abundant evidence, than was absolutely necessary, or is commonly thought to be given barely by a promise, that he might demonstrate to his people, whom he has made the heirs of all the promises, and of the blessings included in that to *Abraham*; and might satisfy them, that his promise is as sure to them as it was to him, and that his free and eternal purpose and infinitely wise counsel of peace, which he has revealed and ascertained in the promise, is unchangeably the same, and never shall be repealed, defeated, or falsified: For this reason, I say, he condescended so far, as to swear to it by himself, and so he has as it were sealed his promise by a solemn oath, interposing *that* (*ἡ ὑπόσχεσις αὐτοῦ*) for its performance, to put an end to all the unbelieving objections, doubts, and fears, which he foresaw his own children, under a sense of their unworthiness, and of the difficulty and unlikelihood of its accomplishment, would be apt to raise about it.

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to

18 That so by two unchangeable things, his promise and his oath, in either, and much more in both, of which, it is absolutely impossible that the unalterably true and faithful God, *with whom is no variableness,*

NOTE

* This shows that a *solemn oath*, and particularly of a *promissory nature*, like oaths of *fidelity* and *allegiance*, are lawful, when taken in a religious manner, under the gospel-state: otherwise the apostle would never have spoke of an oath with so much honour, as a proper means of confirmation, to put an end to all strife; and God himself, under the law, had enjoined that solemn oaths should be taken by his people for such like purposes in several cases, as in *Exod. xxii. 11. Numb. xxx. 2. Deut. vi. 13.* But we may be sure that he

would never have laid these injunctions upon them, were swearing, on proper occasions unlawful, or inexpedient: And both before the law of *Moses*, and under it, we often read of the most religious persons swearing themselves, and requiring an oath from others, for the more strongly ascertaining the truth of what they said. See among other places, *Gen. xxi. 23, 24. and xxiv. 3. and xlvii. 31. Josh. ii. 12, 17, 10. Judg. xv. 12. and 1 Sam. xx. 17. and xxiv. 21, 22.* (See also the note on *Mat. v. 34.*)

to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

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ness, neither shadow of turning, (Jam. i. 17.) and who can as soon cease to be God, as cease to be true; we might have the firmest ground possible for the most abundant, prevailing, and solid comfort, and might possess it with unshaken confidence, and the sweetest delight in our own souls, to overcome all our doubts and fears, and support us under all our trials and afflictions; even we, who, like the manslayer under the law, that slew to the city of refuge for his life, (Numb. xxxv. 11, 12.) have been enabled to fly, under a sense of guilt and danger, with the utmost eagerness and speed, concern and vigour, for deliverance from pursuing wrath and justice, and for safety in Christ, the promised seed; to apprehend and fix by faith on him, and on the grace and faithfulness of God through him, according to the promises, which are all confirmed, and shall be fulfilled even to eternal life, by him; who, together with all that is in him*, is proposed to our faith and hope in the declarations and promises of the gospel, that we may have recourse to him for our support and comfort under all tribulations here, and for our everlasting happiness hereafter.

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail,

19 Which object of hope, as laid hold on, or hoped and trusted in by faith, that goes out of ourselves to it, has a mighty efficacy, both to secure our souls from destruction, and to hold them fast and steady amidst all the dangers and troubles of this present life, as a strong anchor, cast out of a ship, does the vessel that is tossed about by the winds and waves of a tempestuous sea: And as Christ himself, the object of this hope, is passed through the region of the air, into the place of God's peculiar residence and glory; (as the high priest under the law passed through the second vail into the holy of holies, chap. ix. 3, 7.) so our hope in Christ casts anchor, not downwards, as other anchors are cast down to the bottom of the sea;

N O T E.

* Hope in this, and, perhaps, in the next verse, cannot well mean the grace of hope that is in us; for it is said to be a hope set before us, and a hope which we fly to, and lay hold upon, in allusion to the manslayer's flying to the city of refuge, and laying hold of the hope provided for his security there; and it is called an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, in allusion to the anchor of a ship, which does not hold it stedfast, as it is in the ship itself, but as cast out of it, and fastening on sure ground at a distance from it. Hope therefore there includes, and in this verse directly signifies, the object of hope, or that which

is hoped in, as it often does in other places, particularly in Acts xxviii. 20. and 1 Tim. i. 1.; and this object of it most directly means Christ, who is the hope which is said to have entered into that within the vail; and yet the promises, and God through him, according to the promises, which are all *Ten* and *Amen* in him, 2 Cor. i. 20. and which had been spoken of in the foregoing context, may be considered as included together with Christ, as the object of our hope: But we cannot be said to lay hold of, and cast anchor on him, without an exercise of the grace of hope in him.

sea; but upwards, as it enters through the visible heavens after him, into that glorious world which lies beyond them, and is hid by them as by a veil, from our corporal sight; and there it fastens upon him, and the Father through him, as exhibited in the promises.

20 Whither the fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

20 Into which blessed and glorious state our exalted Head and Saviour is entered, not indeed like the *Aaronical* high priests of old, with respect to their going alone, through the veil, into the holy place, without any other being allowed to go thither after them; (*chap. ix. 7.*) but as the pledge and earnest of our following him, that are true believers in him, who is gone thither in a double *public* capacity for our safety and happiness, and to act there for us; One is that of a *fore-runner* *, who, as such, declares what he has done and suffered on earth; to make way for our arrival after him, and notifies in heaven, that we in due time and order are coming to be there with him; he also prepares, secures, and takes possession of glorious mansions there for us, (*Jobn xiv. 2. and Ephes. ii. 6.*) and makes all things ready for our entrance into the holiest of all after him by faith now, (*chap. x. 19,—22.*) and for our *personal* entrance in due time, that *we may be for ever with him, where he is, to behold his glory.* (*John xviii. 24.*) And the other public character, in which he is entered, is that of an *high priest*, which Jesus our Saviour is, who, as has been observed, (*chap. v. 6.*) is constituted in that office, not indeed after the order of *Aaron*, which was temporary and successive, from one age to another; but after the much higher order of *Melchisedec*, as an interceding, as well as atoning high priest, that has no successor, but abides in his person and office for ever. (See the note on *chap. v. 10.*) This brings us to the resemblance there is between Christ and *Melchisedec*, which was proposed (*chap. v. 10, 11. and vi. 1,—3.*) to be considered particularly and at large; and shall be now explained in the following comparison between them. (*Chap. vii.*)

RECOLUTIONS.

How incumbent is it on gospel-professors to be progressive in all spiritual understanding! Though the first principles of religion must be retained and adhered to, such as the doctrines of *repentance* and *faith*, (which were signified by legal washings

NOTE.

* A *fore-runner* is wont to be *left in* runner could do for those that were to dignity than those that are to follow come after him; and it is a high honour put upon all the saints, that they have such a glorious fore-runner, as Jesus, to appear in the presence of God for them. in his own right, than any other fore-

ings and impositions of hands) and the doctrines of *the resurrection* and a *judgment to come*; yet we ought not to stop here, but to advance forwards, in still sublimer points of the gospel, for further edification in faith, comfort, and holiness unto complete salvation. How great is the danger of *mere professors*, that are partakers only of such gifts of the Spirit, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as are common to nominal and real Christians! They may have these, and yet may have no more than such a taste of the good things of the gospel, as their carnal hearts soon disrelish and reject; and so may apostatize from their profession of Christ, and, like barren ground that brings forth nothing but briars and thorns, may be disapproved of God, and in the nearest danger of falling under executions of his wrath and curse, as fuel fit for everlasting burnings: And this will certainly be the dreadful end of *utter apostates*, who, as much as in them lies, crucify the Son of God again; and put him to open shame; and so desperate is their case, that they cannot possibly be recovered to true repentance! But O how safe and happy are those that are partakers of special grace. They are favoured with better things, even things that stand connected with, and shall certainly issue in eternal salvation: For the faithful God will be ever mindful of his covenant-engagements, and of their faith, and labour of love, which they manifest toward himself, in affectionately ministering to the saints, for his sake, in obedience to his command, and for the glory of his name; they are like good ground, that brings forth excellent fruit, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ; and are under a divine blessing for improvement unto eternal life. And O what a sure and blessed ground of hope have they in the promise and oath of God, that his unalterable counsel of wisdom and love concerning them shall be accomplished! As solemn oaths are justly deemed the strongest testimony for confirming depositions among men; so the most high God has condescended to swear solemnly by himself, to satisfy the heirs of salvation about the veracity of his promise, according to his eternal counsel, which is unchangeably and irreversibly confirmed to them, in like manner as it was to *Abraham*. They ought therefore to depend firmly upon it for their abundant consolation; and this should engage their utmost care and diligence, in the use of all the means of grace, and in an exercise of faith and love, with perseverance therein, that they may attain a full assurance of hope, and *that* to the end of their days, as followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. And O how safe and solid is the hope, that has Christ, and a promising God in him, for its object, and flies for refuge to him! This is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and enters into heaven itself, after our exalted Head and Saviour, who is gone thither, as an incomparably glorious Fore-runner, and as our great High Priest, after the order of *Melchisedec*, who ever lives to make intercession for us.

C H A P. VII.

The apostle returns from his digression to the comparison he had proposed to make between the priesthood of Melchisedec and of Christ, in which he gives an account of Melchisedec, 1,—3. Shews the excellency of his above the Levitical priesthood, 4,—10. Applies all this to Christ, to set forth the superior dignity and perfection of his priesthood, even to the superceding and disannulling of that, which was after the order of Aaron under the law, 11,—24. And draws an inference from this, to the encouragement of the faith and hope of the church, 25,—28.

TEXT.

FOR this Melchisedec king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who

PARAPHRASE.

TO proceed then to show the excellency of Christ's priesthood, It bears the most eminent correspondence to that of *Melchisedec*, which vastly exceeded that of *Aaron*: For this famous *Melchisedec*, after whose

who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

whose order Christ is an High Priest, as has been mentioned once and again, (*chap. v. 10.* see the note there, and *vi. 20.*) and of whom our Lord is the great antitype, both in his kingly and priestly office: This *Melchisedec*, was a certain renowned king of *Jerusalem*, anciently called *Salem*; (*Psal. lxxvi. 2.*) and that he might be the fitter type of Christ, he was also an eminent priest; peculiarly appointed and constituted, as such, by the only living and true God to minister before him, who is far exalted above all gods: (*Psal. xcvi. 9.*) And he was so great a man in his person and office, that when the patriarch *Abraham* returned from his conquest and slaughter of the four kings of the nations round about him, *Melchisedec* met and entertained him with bread and wine; and, in the execution of his priestly office, authoritatively pronounced a blessing upon him; (*Gen. xiv. 18, 20.*) and so he was a high priest, prior and superior to *Aaron*, not of one nation only, as *Aaron* was; but of all nations of the earth, before *Israel* were separated, as a peculiar people to the Lord; and he therein was the more exact and complete type of Christ, who is the High Priest of *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*. (1 John ii. 1, 2.)

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also, king of Salem, which is, king of peace;

2 To this *Melchisedec* also, *Abraham*, in acknowledgment of his superior character of priesthood, paid tithes, which were the tenth part of all the spoils that he had taken in the war. (*Gen. xiv. 20.*)—As to his *titles*, in which he was a remarkable type of Christ, He was, according to the signification of his name, *King of righteousness*, being a just and holy man in himself, and in the administration of his government; and then (*γεννας δε βασις*) he was also, by a denomination taken from *Salem*, the place where he was king, styled, according to the meaning of that word, *King of peace*, which was the effect of his righteous government; and so he was a proper and lively type of Christ, who is anointed of God to his *kingly*, as well as *priestly* office; is sinless, holy, and righteous in his own person; (*ver. 26.*) loves righteousness and hates iniquity; and the sceptre of whose kingdom is a *right sceptre*; (*Pl. xlv. 6, 7.*) who is also the *Lord our righteousness*, by whose obedience many are made righteous: (*Jer. xxiii. 6.* and *Rom. v. 19.*) And, as the fruit of this, he is the *Prince of peace*, (*Is. ix. 6.*) he having made peace with God, and reconciled us to him by the blood of his cross, (*Eph. ii. 14, 16.*) and thereupon preached peace; and he is the author of all the blessings of spiritual peace, and prosperity, and of an affectionate and holy harmony among his subjects between themselves, in the admini-

stration

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

stration of his kingdom, as well as of peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost in their own souls.

3 As to *Melchisedec's original*, It is purposely concealed in the scripture-history of him, which gives no account of his father or mother; nor do we find any genealogy of his priesthood, as we do of *Aaron* and his family, or of the *Levitical* priests, whose father was *Aaron*, and whose mother, in their several generations, was to be an *Israelite*: (Lev. viii. 2. and xxi. 14.) He did not, like them, descend from *Aaron*, or derive his pedigree from any family of priesthood whatsoever, there having been none of that office among any predecessors in his house; nor indeed is there the least account of any ancestors that he had; nor have we any record either of his birth or death, or of the beginning or end of his priesthood; but he is mentioned without any notice taken of either of these, as though he had never *began to be* in any date of time, and had never *expired* and come to an end of his life, or priesthood: But * he is represented in this peculiar manner, with regard to all these particulars, that he might be a more eminent figure, and bear the highest resemblance possible of the eternal Son of God, who in his *human nature* had no earthly father; nor was, any more than *Melchisedec*, of the tribe of *Levi*; and in his *divine nature* had no mother, nor any human parentage at all; but was from everlasting to everlasting God; and his designation to *office*, by covenant-constitution, was before all worlds: And as he is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*; (chap. xiii. 8.) so he continues everlastingly, singly, and alone, without any predecessor or successor, as well as without any partner in his priestly office, in which he *ever lives to make intercession for them that come unto God by him*. (ver. 25.)

4 Now, in order to your having the more exalted thoughts of the excellency and dignity of Christ's priesthood, and being convinced of the danger of adhering to that of the *Levitical* tribe, I desire that ye would carefully observe, and attentively reflect upon the foregoing account of *Melchisedec*, that ye may see how uncommonly great a man he was, in his office and favour with God, in which he prefigured Christ, according to the magnificent description that has but now been given of him, to whom *Abraham* himself, that noble progenitor, not only of one, but of

N O T E.

* *Abides a priest continually*, seems but very common *ellipsis* of the article (or) *who abides* a priest continually, or unto perpetuity. (See Mr. Peirce on the place.)

of all the tribes of *Israel*; even he, great as he was, and in whom ye yourselves glory above all others, (*John* viii. 39, 53.) made a religious offering, as to *his superior*, under the character of the priest of the most high God, even an offering of the tenth part of all the spoils that he had made of the riches of those kings, and of their armies, which he had vanquished in war. (*ver.* 1.) He therefore must be greater, by the ordination of God, than *Abraham* himself*, and much more must Christ be so, whose type only *Melchisedec* was.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of *Levi*, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of *Abraham*:

5 And truly, to show how the dignity of the priesthood appears in the business of *tithing*, the descendants of *Aaron* among the sons of *Levi*, who were invested with the office of priesthood under the law, had a particular warrant to claim and receive tithes, which the Lord had appropriated to himself, (*Lev.* xxvii. 30, 31.) from all the people of *Israel*, according to the settlement that was made of those dues in the law of *Moses*, as to the matter and manner of them; (*Numb.* xviii. 21, 26.) and these they received from the rest of the tribes, even of their brethren according to the flesh, though *they*, as well as themselves, were descendants from the loins of *Abraham*, and, as such, had originally an equal right to all the privileges that pertained to them, as his offspring; and so the very law of tithes shows that superior honour belongs to him who receives them, above him that pays them.

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of *Abraham*, and blessed him that had the promises.

6 But *Melchisedec*, whose genealogy is unwritten and unknown, cannot be reckoned a descendant from the *Levitical* priests, he having existed long before any of that tribe were in being. This extraordinary man was so much greater than they, that he had the honour of receiving tithes of their eminent patriarch *Abraham* himself, as has been observed; (*ver.* 2, 4.) and, more than this, he, as a priest, authoritatively pronounced a blessing, in the name of *the most high God*, upon that father of the faithful, with whom God made the covenant of promises, and confirmed it with an oath, (*chap.* vi. 13,—16.) as it related to him and his posterity, who claim and hold all their privileges and blessings under him, as their representative therein.

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7 And

NOTE.

* Barely giving does not make the argument for *Melchisedec's* being greater receiver than the giver; for our Lord said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*, (*Acts* xx. 35.) which intimates that, in the way of *charity*, the most high God, in acknowledgment of him as such, is the greatest; and therefore the

7 And without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And, as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him.

7 And from this consideration itself it appears, that there is no manner of cause to dispute or doubt, either upon the common principles of reason, or of revelation, but that *Melchisedec* was a more excellent person in his office than *Abraham*; because an authoritative benediction, as from God and in his name, is not delivered by a lesser to a greater, but by a greater to a lesser person in the office, by virtue of which he blesses him. Christ the antitype therefore must needs be a much greater high priest still, as he, in the right of his own purchase, effectually blesses his people with all spiritual blessings.

8 And there is this further proof of *Melchisedec's* superiority to all the sons of *Levi*, (ver. 5.) that here, in their case, by the constitution of the law of *Moses*, they which received tithes are, like the rest of the whole human race, mortal men, whose birth and death in their several generations we are well acquainted with by the sacred writings: But, in the other case of *Melchisedec*, he received tithes, who is not spoken of in the scripture under the character of a mortal man, or of one that died for any other to succeed him in his office; but is represented only as *living*, as if he had no beginning of days or end of life, as to his person or priesthood; (ver. 3.) and so the record stands of him as if he lived for ever; the design of which was, that he might be the more eminent type of Christ, who in his divine nature really has from everlasting to everlasting an immortal life, and who, though in his human nature he once died, is now alive, and never died out of his office, but lives in his priesthood for ever after the order of *Melchisedec*. (Chap. v. 6.)

9 And to add one thought more, to sum up the argument relating to the superiority of *Melchisedec* to all the *Levitical* priests, I may say that in a certain sense, as by just construction, the whole tribe of *Levi* also, who by the law received tithes, did themselves virtually pay tithes to him, in and through *Abraham*, as their common father, representative, and covenant-head.

10 For *Levi* and all his descendents were comprehended in their natural and covenant-father *Abraham*; they having been included in him, not only as an effect in its cause, and offspring in their parents, but also as a people are in their representatives*, which

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* It seems to me that *Levi's*, or, as it is to be understood, that his and his son's paying tithes in, or by *Abraham*, (*δια Αβρααμ*) is to be considered with relation

to their being in *Abraham's* loins, not merely as their natural, but as their covenant-father, who had received the promises for them, as well as for himself; otherwise

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which *Abraham* was to all *Israel* in the covenant of promises, made with him for himself and them, before *Melchisedec* met him, and received tithes from him, and blessed him; (*Gen. xii. 1,—3*) and so he was undoubtedly greater in his office than any *Levite* whatsoever.

11 If therefore perfection were by the *Levitical* priesthood, (for under it the people received the law) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of *Melchisedec*, and not be called after the order of *Aaron*?

11 To apply all this therefore to the main argument in hand, relating to our Lord Jesus Christ, the great *High Priest over the house of God*, (*chap. x. 21.*) if there were an accomplishment of the good things themselves, that were signified by the ordinances of the *Levitical* priesthood; or if perfection were really and effectually to be obtained, in point of atonement to satisfy divine justice, and cleanse the conscience from guilt, (*chap. ix. 9.*) and to give us acceptance with God to eternal life, together with an humble confidence in him, and holy liberty and boldness of access to him, and hope of future glory; and if the perfect state of the church, as to its institutions, of spiritual worship, were to be acquired by the offerings, sacrifices, and services, that belonged to the priesthood, which the sons of *Levi* were concerned in according to the law; (for it was together with, and in relation to that priesthood, that the church of *Israel* received the ceremonial law *, by the ministry of *Moses*, and were obliged to observe it, which ascertained all the privileges and blessings that were to accrue to them from it:) if, I say, perfection, with regard to these things, were attainable by the *Levitical* priesthood itself, or by the whole system of the law which it belonged to, What necessity, or further occasion could there be, that another

sort

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otherwise I am at a loss to see for what purpose *Abraham's having the promises* is mentioned in this argument, *ver. 6.* which may be naturally supposed to be referred to here: And this may help to illustrate the doctrines of the imputation of *Adam's* sin and *Christ's* righteousness. As all mankind were in *Adam*, as their natural father and federal head, when he sinned, so they virtually sinned in him: And as all *Christ's* spiritual seed were in him as their public representative and federal head, when he died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, so they virtually died and rose in him. (See *Eph. ii. 6.*) Accordingly, as *Adam's* sin actually takes place upon all his offspring, when they come to derive their natural being from him; so *Christ's* righteousness actually takes place upon all his spiritual seed, when

they come to derive spiritual life from him, by virtue of their vital union, through faith, to him.

* This, as some may think, seems to intimate that the *Levitical* priesthood was set up before the giving of the law, whereas the law was given at Mount *Sinai* before the institution of that priesthood. But though the moral law was delivered, *Exod. xx.* before the institution of the *Levitical* priesthood; yet *Israel's* acceptable performance of the obedience it required under that dispensation, depended upon that priesthood; and the ceremonial law, which contained all the services, sacrifices, and ordinances of worship, pertaining to that priesthood, was given after the institution of the priesthood itself. (*Lev. i. 1,—8.*)

sort of priest, of a different and higher rank and order, should be set up and exalted to the dignity of that office, as it has been shown (*chap. v. 5, 6.*) Christ was to be after the order of *Melchisedec*? And why should he not be denominated, as he is not in any place of scripture, a priest according to the common course of the Levitical priesthood, which was to be after the order of *Aaron*? There certainly could be no need of this new and higher sort of priesthood; but it must be entirely useless, upon a supposition that all the ends of a priesthood, and of the law to which it belonged, could be perfectly answered by that priesthood itself. It is therefore plain from this single consideration, that both *that* priesthood and the law, which were inseparably interwoven, were to be abolished, as they now are, to make way for a better priesthood, and evangelical dispensation, in the person of Christ.

11 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

12 For the order of the priesthood being altered, so as to be transferred from that, which was appointed by, and stood connected with the law of *Moses*, to another of a different and more excellent kind, there must of necessity, in consequence of this, be a like alteration made, as to the law itself; so as to abolish *that*, (the whole administration of which was confined to the *Aaronical* priesthood) and to introduce another evangelical constitution that pertains to, and derives its efficacy from, this more excellent priesthood of a superior order.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken, pertained to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

13 And that Christ is not a priest of *Aaron's* order, like those under the law, is evident; for he, who was pointed to in all the things, that have hitherto been said about *Melchisedec* and his priesthood, was not of the tribe of *Levi*, to which the legal priesthood was confined; but he sprang from another tribe of *Israel*, which had no share in, but was, together with all the other tribes, excluded from that priesthood; none of them, besides that of *Levi*, having had any right to officiate in the priestly character, by offering the sacrifices that were presented on the brazen altar, or performing any services relating to *that**, or to the altar of incense.

14 For

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* When king *Uzziah*, who was of the tribe of *Judah*, went into the temple, to burn incense on the altar of incense, it is said, that he transgressed against the Lord his God, and *Azariah*, the chief priest, and four-score priests of the Lord withstood him, saying, It pertains not unto thee, *Uzziah*, to burn incense to the Lord, but to the priests, the sons

of *Aaron*: And God was so highly offended at the King's attempt to break in upon his institution, that *Uzziah* was immediately struck with a leprosy in his forehead; and he was a leper unto the day of his death. (2 Chron. xxvi. 16, 21.) God hereby testified in the severest manner against such, as under that dispensation should venture to exercise any part

14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

14 For it is plain beyond all controversy, as had been manifested beforehand (*προηλθεν*) in an ancient prophecy of the *Messiah*, (Gen. xlix. 10.) and was acknowledged by the chief priests and scribes themselves, (*Mat. ii. 4,—6.*) that *the Christ* was to arise from the tribe of *Judah*; and it is certain from our Lord's *genealogy*, (*Luke iii. 23,—38.*) that he arose from that tribe, and particularly from the royal family of *David*: But, concerning which tribe, *Moses* in the book of the law never once mentioned, or intimated, that any one of them should exercise the priestly function under that dispensation; and his silence about it is a sufficient proof, (as silence in all cases of institution is) that none of the tribe of *Judah* ever had any authority to assume that office to themselves.

15 And it is yet far more evident; for that after the similitude of *Melchisedec* there ariseth another priest,

15 And it is yet more abundantly plain, even to a demonstration, * that the priesthood, and consequently the law that depended upon it, is so changed as to be abolished, according to what has been said; (*ver. 12.*) because, answerable to former predictions, another priest is now raised up, by the ordination of God, after *the likeness*, which is much the same with after *the order*, of *Melchisedec*, in a resemblance of his priesthood, which has been shown to be of a different and more excellent nature, than that of *Aaron*; (*ver. 1,—11.*)

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

16 Even a High Priest, who is constituted in his office, not according to the law of *Moses*, which settled the Levitical priesthood, and consisted of precepts that may be called *carnal commandments*, as they required the sacrifices of beasts, and consisted of such rites as *sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh*; (*chap. ix. 13.*) and as the priests themselves were consecrated to their office by carnal ceremonies, and were no more than weak, frail, and dying men, according to the order of a fleshly generation, and so needed a succession of them to perform its functions from age to age; and as all this was enjoined by a system of laws contained in *carnal ordinances*, which were imposed on the Israelites until the time of reformation, (*chap. ix. 10.*) that was to be made under the

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part of the priestly function; and exemplarily punished one of the tribe of *Judah*, though a king, for it, the more remarkably to exclude that tribe from any pretensions to it; and *this is the tribe from which the apostle observes, in the next verse, our Lord sprang.*

* I take this and the two next verses to be brought in as a second proof of what was asserted, *ver. 12.* about the

change of the priesthood and of the law. The proof given of this in *ver. 13, 14.* was taken from Christ's being not of the tribe of *Levi*, but of *Judah*; and the yet far more evident proof of that point here, and in the two following verses, is taken from the entirely different nature of the legal priesthood, and the priesthood of Christ.

the more spiritual and holy dispensation of the gospel, relating to the worship, privileges, and blessings of the church: But, in opposition to the nature of that priesthood, Christ was made a High Priest by a more excellent and ever-abiding constitution, in which he was consecrated to that office, according to the ability which he has to execute it, by virtue of that immortal life, which he has in himself, as the eternal Son of God, and by virtue of his re-assumed human life in heaven, according to which he lives for ever to discharge his glorious priesthood in his own person, and to give eternal life to all those, for whom he acts as a priest, without any partner with him, or successor to him therein: And so his priesthood must be incomparably more excellent, perfect, efficacious, and durable, than any that preceded it under the law*.

17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

17 For, as has been observed again and again, (*chap. v. 6, 10*; see the note there, and *vi. 20*.) God the Father declared, in a way of divine testimony to him by the mouth of *David*, even while the Levitical priesthood was in its full glory, *Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*, (*Psal. cx. 4*.) that is, thou art peculiarly and eminently a priest, not after the similitude of *Aaron's* lower, but of *Melchisedec's* higher priesthood; (*ver. 15*.) not for any limited dispensation that shall give way to a better, nor in a succession of one priest after another; but immutably in thine own person, till all the ends of thy acting in that character shall be perfected; and thenceforth to all eternity, in the honours that belong to thee for having completely executed that office, and in its glorious effects to the eternal salvation of the whole church.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

18 For in this new and everlasting priesthood of Christ after the order of *Melchisedec*, there is, in reality, an abrogation of the whole system of the *Mosaic* law, and of all its institutions, which depended upon the Levitical priesthood, and preceded the introduction of the gospel-state, which is built upon the priesthood of Christ. This, I say, is now certainly abolished and set aside, by reason of its insufficiency, unavailableness, and impossibility to purge the conscience

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* Though Christ died in his human nature, *that* was because he was a sacrifice, as well as a priest; and his offering up himself as a sacrifice was an act of his priesthood; and so he officiated as a priest in his very dying; and consequently did not die out of his office for others to succeed him, as the Levitical priests did, since his priesthood suffered no interrup-

tion by his dying; and as in his divine nature it was impossible that he should die; so, according to its powerful life, he continued immortal in his sacerdotal office; and he re-assumed his human life, that he might fulfil the remainder of his priesthood in ever living to make intercession for them, that come unto God by him, *ver. 25*.

conscience from guilt, and justify a sinner to eternal life: As the *moral law* could not do this, *in that it was weak through the flesh*; (Rom. viii. 3. see the note there) so neither could the *ceremonial law*, in that it was only a type or *shadow of good things to come, and not the very image*, much less the substance of them; and could not by any of its sacrifices take away sin. (Chap. x. 1,—4.)

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

19 For the *Mosaic law* was of itself incapable of perfecting its worshippers in any thing that pertains to the conscience, and to reconciliation with God: It was only designed to prefigure and prepare the way for, and point to, what should be effectual for these purposes, as it was our *schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith* in him; (Gal. iii. 24.) but the introduction of the gospel-state, and of Christ, this better High Priest, and of his truly expiatory sacrifice, who, in the discharge of his priestly office, is the object of our hope, gives us a better ground of confidence, and a surer hope toward God, than the law ever could; and has perfected all that was deficient in the law itself, and prefigured by it: Under these considerations, *we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Christ*, (Ephes. iii. 12.) and so, as a *holy priesthood*, may offer up *spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; (1 Pet. ii. 5.) yea, we have a better, nearer, and more advantageous approach to God through Christ by faith, in gospel-worship, than even the *Aaronical* priests themselves had with their sacrifices and offerings, when they went into the holy of holies; and we are not debarred this liberty, as the people then were, who were kept at a distance; but, *through Jesus Christ, every true believer has access by one Spirit to the Father*. (Ephes. ii. 18.)

20 And in as much as not without an oath he was made priest;

20 And we may well be assured of this, for as much as he was constituted in his office, not as the priests of old were in a common way, but by a solemn oath of God himself, to signify the excellency, immutability, and perpetuity of his priesthood, as what should never fail.

21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath, by him that said unto him, The Lord swear, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

21 For all the former priests under the law were constituted in their office, without the solemnity of ratification by an oath; nothing of that kind being ever hinted in their consecration to it, which left their office in a repealable state, whenever God should please: But this great and glorious High Priest, even *Jesus*, whom we are speaking of, (ver. 22.) was constituted in his office with all the irrevocable solemnity of an oath by God his Father, who said unto him in the place so often referred to already, (*Psal. cx. 4.*)

The Lord hath sworn by himself, and will never retract or reverse it, Thou art, in thine own person, without any successor, an everlasting and unchangeable High Priest, after the similitude of *Melchisedec*, even unto the consummation of all things. (See the note on chap. v. 10.)

21 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

22 In proportion then to the superior excellence of *this* to the *Aaronical* priesthood, as to the nature of the office and the manner of establishment in it, Jesus, the once crucified, but now exalted Saviour, was constituted by God the Father's own appointment and investiture, an undertaker, promiser and sponsor*, in a way of suretyship to him for us, to ratify

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* A *surety* or *sponsor* (*εγγυος*) is one that draws nigh, undertakes or promises, and is bound for another, either to do or pay that for him which he cannot, or will not do or pay for himself: It is one who engages for another, that the obligations which he is under shall be one way or other answered. Such a surety is Christ, not for God to his people, as some would have it; for God needs no surety for him to secure the performance of his promises to us; nor do we need any one from him, merely for the confirmation of our faith in them, since his own unchangeable veracity, as manifested in his word and oath, are an absolute security, and the highest evidence of it, and of his performing them, as had been declared, chap. vi. 13.—19. And in the nature of things, a surety ought to be a person of more credit and ability than he is for whom he engages, or at least ought to be one that is provided to secure against some defect or failure of fidelity, or capacity, that possibly may be found in him for whom he is a surety; neither of which can be said of God without blasphemy. And if Christ were only in a *lax sense* a surety, in a way of *witness* for God; this is by no means a proper suretyship; nor is it any thing different in its nature and kind from what was done by the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, in the testimony they have given under divine inspiration to him.

But *Christ is a surety for us to God*: We needed that he should be so, as we are sinful creatures, and insolvent of what is required by the law, as a covenant of works, which was broke for want of a surety to engage for our keeping it; and without a surety, the new covenant would be in danger of being broken on our part, as that with *Adam* was. And as the apostle's discourse in this context

is professedly all along about the *priesthood* of Christ, his being a *surety* relates to the execution of his *priestly office*, which, like that of the priests under the law, was for the people to God, and not for God to the people: And though the covenant of grace, considered as a *testament*, was confirmed by the death of Christ, (chap. ix. 15.—17. see the note there) and all its blessings were purchased by it; and though the covenant was made, with a reference to his death, as the procuring cause of all its benefits, in the virtue of which they should be brought home and applied to us, through faith in him; yet his death did not procure the covenant itself, which was made long before, with a *proviso* of the death of Christ, as the *grand condition* of its taking effect: But the covenant itself is merely the effect of the infinite wisdom and grace of God in the eternal counsels of his will; and its dispensation to us is founded upon the covenant-transactions before all worlds between the Father and Son, about the manner and means of accomplishing its great design, as might be most honourable to all God's perfections in bringing many sons to glory. Accordingly, Christ as the *surety* of the covenant undertook to satisfy divine justice for all their transgressions, to redeem them from the curse of the law, and deliver wrath and misery, slavery and ruin, and to purchase for them all the blessings of grace and glory, chap. ix. 15; and he further engaged to furnish them with all those supplies of his Spirit and grace, through the merit of his blood, as should be necessary to renew and sanctify them, and bring them to faith and repentance, and enable them to fulfil the duties of the covenant, that should be incumbent upon them, to prevent their violating its sacred bonds, and defeating their

tify the new covenant by his death, and to take effectual care that all the requirements be answered, that were necessary to secure the accomplishment of its promises; which is a better covenant *, than that made with *Israel* at mount *Sinai*, as it has a better surety than any of the high priests of old could be; and as its administration is with greater light and simplicity; and with wider extent to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, and is *established upon better promises*, (chap. viii. 6.) which also may be considered as a *testamentary covenant* †, in one view of it, as it was

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their interest in it, by wilful disobedience and utter apostasy, through the power of indwelling corruptions, and surrounding temptations, by which they would certainly miscarry, were they left to themselves.

* *Christ's being the surety of a better covenant*, seems to suppose that the covenant made with *Israel* had a surety, which may refer, not to *Moses* personally, but to the *high priest*, as such, who, in the execution of his office, was a sort of typical mediator and surety on behalf of the people to God, by means of a typical expiation, which he made on the great day of atonement. (See Dr. Owen on the place.)

† The Greek word rendered *covenant*, (διαθήκη a διατηναι dispono) and the Hebrew word, which answers it, (ברית a ברא creavit) signifies any disposition, constitution, settlement, or establishment of things; and so is applicable to either of these senses, wherever it is found in the Old or New Testament; and what sort of constitution or establishment is meant by it, in every place, is to be gathered from the context, and the nature of the things there spoken of, whether it be a constitution by a law, or mutual compact, or a free promise, or a testament: It is mostly translated *covenant* in this epistle, as well as in other places, and it may very well be so; unless when there is a particular reference to the nature and use of a testament among men, in which view it seems to be represented, chap. ix. 15, — 17. with reference to the death of a testator to put it in force. But which way soever it be rendered, it signifies a constitution, settlement, or establishment of one kind or other, and when it is used to express the covenant of grace, which is a covenant of free promise, it may be considered as containing the nature of a testamentary covenant, which depends entirely upon the

good-will and pleasure of the donor, as to the blessings bestowed, and the persons that shall have them; and as to the time, way, terms, and means, in which the bestowment of them shall take effect through the death of Christ, rather than as containing the nature of a proper, strict, and formal covenant, which, in our usual acceptation of the word, is an agreement between two or more parties about things, that are, or may be in their own power to perform; which can never be reconciled to the scripture-representation of the covenant of grace, as made between God and sinful men: And, perhaps, this may be one reason, why this covenant is commonly expressed by a word, which, of all other constitutions, primarily signifies a testament; and I see no inconsistency in supposing, that the substance of the same gracious settlement, or disposition of spiritual blessings, may be called both a covenant and a testament, only with this difference, that when it is called a covenant, it leads our thoughts to God in Christ, as the Maker of it; but when it is called a testament, it carries an idea of its being made by Christ: And so if we consider it as a covenant of promises, which God made with his people in Christ, it was ratified by his blood, under the notion of a Mediator, or Surety; but if we consider it as a testament, which Christ made, correspondent to God's covenant, it was ratified by his death, under the notion of a testator, that has bequeathed legacies to the heirs of salvation, and has made a declaration of his will with relation thereunto: And therefore, though considering it under the formal notion of a testament made by Christ, it needed no mediator or surety; yet considering it under the formal notion of a covenant, which God made with his people in and through Christ, it both needed and had a Mediator,

finally put in force by the death of Christ, who, as a testator, bequeathed all its blessings to the heirs of promise. (Chap. ix. 15.—17.)

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 23 And indeed, further to show the weakness and unprofitableness of the legal dispensation, (ver. 18.) it is well known, that though the high priest's office itself were but one; and though but one at a time could execute it, yet there was a succession of many of them that officiated in it from generation to generation; because they being merely mortal men, were not permitted, by reason of death, to live in the perpetual exercise of their office; nor was it possible that they should, since they all died like other men, and then their priestly function, as vested in their own persons respectively, died with them, and they could never re-assume it again, or continue to carry it on in another world; which shows that there was an imperfection and mutability in that state of the church.

24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

24 But, on the contrary, to assure us of the greater excellence and unchangeableness of the gospel-dispensation, this glorious person Jesus Christ, who was typified by Melchisedec, and was truly a man, but was God as well as man, that he might be a fit Mediator between God and men, and a proper Surety to God for men; this divine man, of whom we are speaking, because he could not die out of his office, as merely mortal men did under the law, abides everlastingly in the execution of it, without any interruption by death; (see the note on ver. 16.) and so in his own single person has an immutable and never-failing priesthood, which cannot pass away from him to another; but which he continues to carry on at his Father's right hand in heaven, by appearing before him, as a lamb that had been slain, (Rev. v. 6.) and as a priest upon his throne. (Zech. vi. 13.)

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth

25 It may therefore be solidly concluded from this, and from all that has been said before concerning Christ, as our great High Priest, that he has not only all divine ability originally in himself; but, in opposition to the weakness of the Aaronical priesthood, he has likewise all office-power* and authority,

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23, as he is called, chap. viii. 6. or a Surety, as we have it in this place. (See the note on chap. ix. 15.)

* Christ's being able to save, relates not to his absolute power as God, who, as such, is able to do all things, that does not imply a contradiction to the nature of things themselves, or to the perfections of his own nature: For though this divine power is fundamental to the ability here ascribed to him, yet it is his office-power, as God-man Mediator, that is here intended, as appears from his unchangeable priesthood mentioned in the preceding verse, from whence his ability is inferred in this verse, for thus the connection stands. Because he continues ever, he has an unchangeable priesthood, therefore he is able to save to the uttermost, &c. And this

eth to make in-
tercession for them.

ty, which includes his *willingness*, to give complete deliverance from all sin and misery, fears and dangers, and to advance to all the glory and blessedness of the heavenly state, in the face of all opposition and difficulty, to the utmost extent of his office-power and merit; to the utmost of the wants, desires, hopes, and capacities for happiness; and to the utmost period of time, yea, even to the eternal salvation of all, that under a sense of their wants make their approaches to God in prayer, and other parts of gospel-worship, through him, for all seasonable relief on his account, as the only Mediator, with faith in his name; since he lives for ever in heaven, not only as a divine person, and as clothed with human nature; but also as their great High Priest and Advocate, (who has a prevailing interest with God the Father) to make continual intercession for them, which he does in the presentation of his person, and of the merit of his sacrifice, and in a plea of right, (*John xvii. 24.*) that all blessings may be given to them, according to the purchase of his blood, which he shed for the remission of their sins, and obtaining eternal redemption for them.

26 For such an
high priest became
us, who is holy,
harmless, undefi-
led, separate from
sinners, and made
higher than the
heavens;

26 For such an excellent, able, ever-living, and perfect High Priest was fit and necessary for us; and it became the infinite wisdom and holiness of God to provide such an one for us, (*chap. ii. 10.*) who is not himself a sinner, as we are, and as all the high priests under the law were; but is unspottedly pure in his nature, thoughts, words, and deeds; (*Luke i. 35.* and *Acts ii. 27.* and *1 Peter ii. 22.*) inoffensive, (*ἀναισχος*) innocent, and blameless, no way injurious to any, and now raised above the reach of being hurt by any; never tainted with the least pollution in heart or life, nor defiled by means of other persons or things (as the legal priests often were) to interrupt him in the performance of his sacerdotal office, yea, was free from original sin, as having been born, not in a natural, or federal way of union with *Adam*, like the rest of mankind; and he was removed to the furthest distance from all communion with sinners in any of their evil principles, ways or works; and * far excels all the angels in holiness, as well as is now, in his exalted state, advanced to the highest authority and glory above them in the heaven of heavens, far beyond all other heavens. (*Eph. iv. 10.*)

27 From

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this farther appears from the proof that is given of his ability for this purpose, in the close of the verse, which is, *Seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.*

* *The heavens*, by a common metonymy, is put for its inhabitants. (See *1 Chron. xvi. 30, 31. Psal. xcvi. 11.* and *Isa. xlix. 13.*)

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the peoples; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high priests, which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

27 From hence it plainly appears that, being absolutely sinless, he had no occasion, as the high priests had under the law, to offer on every great day of atonement *, expiatory sacrifices, first for personal sins of his own, as they did for theirs, (see Lev. xvi.) and then for the sins of his people, as they did for the sins of Israel; but with regard to the *sins of his people*, he did this, and finished it all at once, by way of complete atonement for them, when, *through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself without spot to God*, (chap. ix. 14.) in opposition to the frequent offerings of sacrifices for the peoples sins under the law, and in opposition to those priests that had nothing of *their own*, and nothing better than *beasts and birds* to offer.

28 For the law of a carnal commandment, (ver. 16.) by its constitution and appointment, ordered such to be consecrated to the high priest's office, as are merely mortal men, weak and dying creatures, and no better; (ver. 23.) yea, as are attended with *sinful*, as well as natural infirmities, like other men; and so needed to offer for their own sins; (ver. 27.) but the word which God spoke, and solemnly confirmed with his oath, and delivered in the sacred writings, (Psal. cx. 4.) many hundreds of years after the law was given by *Moses*; this word invests the eternal Son of God himself with his priestly office, who is consecrated to it and perfected in it, (*ἁγιασμένος*) as one that never had any moral defect to be a blemish upon his priesthood or sacrifice, or to require an offering for himself; and who is now in his exalted state entirely free, even from all the natural infirmities of mankind, which he was attended with in this world, that he might be capable of dying as a sacrifice; and so he is every way fit to discharge the remainder of his priesthood for perpetuity in his own person, as our great and only intercessor, without alteration or end, until the whole design of it shall be perfectly accomplished, to the eternal salvation of the church, and of every individual member of it.

RECollections.

How transcendently excellent is the priesthood of Christ, as it is after the order of *Melchisedec*, and confirmed for ever by the oath of God himself! And of what vast importance is it, that our faith be established herein! The apostle thought it

NOTE.

* Daily, (*καθ' ἡμέραν*) relates, I think, not to the daily offerings of the common priests, but to the annual offerings of the high priest, at every return of the great day of atonement, for

it is the office of the high priest, that is here spoken of; and it was only on the anniversary day of atonement, from time to time, that they offered sacrifices for themselves and for the people.

so, or else he would never have taken such abundant pains to illustrate and confirm it. *Melchisedec*, as an extraordinary priest of the most high God, blessed *Abraham*, who, with *Levi*, as naturally and federally included in his loins, paid tribute to this superior priest. But how much more eminent a priest, as well as king of righteousness and peace, is the Son of God, than *Melchisedec*! He was only in type what Christ is in reality: without beginning of days or end of life: without any earthly father according to the flesh, and without any mother according to his divine nature; and an eternal High Priest of such perpetual power and complete acceptance with his heavenly Father, according to the energy of his immortal life, as supercedes the want of any other to make atonement either for believing *Jews* or *Gentiles*. And how different from, and incomparably more excellent is his priesthood than that, which was appointed by the law of a carnal commandment! He sprung, not from the tribe of *Levi*, but of *Judah*, which never had, by divine institution, any share in the high priest's office after the order of *Aaron*, who and his sons were merely mortal men, and in their turns died out of their office, and were succeeded by others of their line, and they all had sins of their own to atone for, before they could offer a sacrifice for the sins of *Israel*. But Christ being holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, could have no occasion to offer any propitiatory sacrifice on his own account; but, by offering up himself, he at once expiated the sins of his people: And as he never died out of his office; so, being made higher than the heavens, he continually and completely exercises it alone by himself, without any predecessor or successor in it. This change of the priesthood naturally brought on an abolition of the law, to which it belonged, on account of the insufficiency of that law and priesthood to perfect the worship and happiness of the church; and introduced the gospel-state, which depends upon, and derives the most substantial efficacy from the priesthood of Christ. How much better grounds of hope then have we in him, and in the gospel of the grace of God through him, than ever could have been had by the law! And with what humble confidence, and happy success, may the believing sinner now approach God in Christ! He is the Surety of the new covenant to undertake with God his Father, that all requirements should be answered in order to a secure accomplishment of its great and precious promises; and he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; since he ever lives as a righteous advocate, to make intercession for them.

C H A P. VIII.

The apostle, having finished his argument drawn from the comparison of the priesthood of *Melchisedec* with that of *Aaron*, shews that his main design therein was to demonstrate the excellency of Christ's priesthood above that of *Aaron*, which he adds still further light to, by comparing him with, and preferring him to, the high priests under the law, with respect to the place where he officiates, the sacrifice he offers, and the covenant of which he is the Mediator, 1,—6. And he goes, by way of digression, into a representation of the great excellence of this covenant above the former, which is now abolished, 7,—13.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW of the things, which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have seen that Christ, as a more excellent high priest, has a more excellent covenant, and a more excellent sacrifice, than *Aaron* and his sons.

N O T E.

* The word (σύμμυσις) here rendered the sum, signifies either a brief summary, or the chief thing.

We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

of the New Testament-church, have such a great and glorious High Priest in the person of our Lord Jesus, as incomparably excels all others, and particularly all the priests of the *Aaronical* order; as further appears from *the place*, where he officiates, who having made atonement for sin by the sacrifice of himself, which he offered upon earth, is now exalted in his human nature, and perpetually abides in the highest dignity and authority for the completing of his office, and securing the application of the benefits of his purchase, as he appears in the immediate presence of the divine majesty, which may be figuratively expressed by his being seated on the most honourable side (as the right hand is deemed to be) of God the Father's most illustrious display of his glory, as on his magnificent throne in the highest heaven. (See the note on *Act. vii. 55.*)

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man.

2 And, notwithstanding his glorious exaltation at the Father's right hand, he condescends to appear and act in his priestly character, as a public minister, officiating towards, and before God for us about sacred things, not in the earthly sanctuary, or *Judaic* holy of holies, which he never entered into, but in the true holy of holies, the habitation of God's most eminent glory, even heaven itself, which is called, with emphatical peculiarity, *his sanctuary*, (*Psal. cii. 19.*) and was typified by that on earth; nor does our blessed Lord minister in the shadowy earthly tabernacle, in which he never officiated as a priest, but in the true substantial tabernacle of his human nature, of which *that* was a type or figure; and (*iv*) which was formed by the immediate power of God, as exerted in the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost upon the virgin *Mary*, (*Luke i. 35.*) * and was not erected

N O T E.

* Some understand the *tabernacle*, of which Christ is said to be the minister, as signifying the *universal church*, for whose benefit, it must be allowed, he officiates as their great High Priest. But he doth not officiate in, or by them, as the means of his heavenly ministration, which seems to be what the apostle here intends, in allusion to the *Jewish* tabernacle, in which, and by means of which, the ancient priests performed their holy ministrations. Others take the *tabernacle* to signify the same with the *sanctuary*, even heaven itself: But this too much carries the face of a needless tautology; since *and* (*και*) here cannot be *exegetical*, because the article (*το*) follows it. I therefore rather apprehend that the *sanctuary* and *tabernacle* may

be considered with a distinction of one from the other; as *the first* alludes to the most holy place, which was a figure of heaven; and *the second* alludes to the *whole* of that sacred edifice which was erected under the *law*. And as God dwelt in the tabernacle with visible emblems of his glory, which filled the house, as it afterwards did the *temple*; (*Exod. xl. 34, 35.* compared with *1 Kings viii. 10, 11.*) so that tabernacle may very properly be regarded as a type of the *body* or *human nature* of Christ: For the human body is called a tabernacle, *2 Cor. v. 1.* and *2 Pet. i. 14.*; and our Lord in his incarnation *dwelt*, or *tabernacled* (*σκηνοοει*) amongst us, (*John i. 14.*) and spoke of his own body as a *temple*, in allusion to the *Jewish* temple,

rected by human aid or assistance, as that tabernacle was in which the legal priests ministered, and which was prepared, set up, and fastened with stakes and cords by the hands of men. And since both the *sanctuary* and *tabernacle*, in which Christ now carries on his priestly office, are more excellent than any that preceded them, we may assuredly conclude, that *this sacrifice*, which he, as a High Priest, presents to God therein, must needs be so too.

3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

3 For the special business of every high priest, for which he is appointed and authorized of God, is to present oblations and sacrifices of atonement, which had been slain and offered, *before* he carried their blood into the holy place, and *in order to* his doing so; it was therefore absolutely necessary, that, to answer that character, this great gospel High Priest, (*ἱερεὺς*) of whom we are speaking, should also have a sacrifice to offer, suitable to his dignity, as God-man, and to the glorious state and place of his present ministrations; and that he should present it in the heavenly sanctuary before the throne of God, as the ancient typical high priest did the blood of the legal sacrifices before the mercy-seat in the most holy place.

4 For

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ple, which in its use succeeded the tabernacle, *John* ii. 19, 21; we are also told, that *in him*, as in its tabernacle, *dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*: (*Col.* ii. 9.) And as the tabernacle was set up only for a time, to be pulled down on occasion, and then erected again; (*Numb.* i. 51. and x. 21.) so was the body of our Lord in his death and resurrection. We may also further observe, that *the sanctuary*, though expressed by a plural noun, (*ἱερόν*) signifies the holiest of all, or the holy place, as it is rendered, *chap.* ix. 8, 12, 25 and that is the sense which I take to be most directly intended here: And yet as it also signifies *holy things*, and as Christ's ministering in his priestly office is about such things, it might not be amiss to suggest that thought also.

* The true *key*, as I take it, of the apostle's argument in this and the two following verses, is, that in allusion to the office of the high priest under the law, who was to kill and offer the sacrifices on the great day of atonement, before he entered, and carried their blood, into the holy place within the veil, as was expressly ordained, (*Lev.* xvi. 5, 15.) Christ offered the sacrifice of himself in his death, before he entered into heaven with his own blood, to present

the virtue of it before the throne of grace, and, as it were, to sprinkle it on the throne, (which was typified by the mercy-seat) for rendering it effectual unto all the great and blessed purposes for which it had been shed, and offered in a sacrificial way on the cross: For this was a necessary part of the service, which belonged to the offering, in order to its fully answering its end, and seems to me to be here principally intended; rather than the offering of the atoning sacrifice itself on the brazen altar, which was finished by the high priest before he entered with its blood into the sanctuary, as Christ's also was on the cross, when through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God, before he entered into heaven: And therefore it would have been inconsistent with the nature of Christ's priesthood for him to have continued on earth, as the apostle argues in the next verse: because *the sanctuary*, in which his ministry as a high priest was to be finished, according to the typical meaning of the holy of holies, is *heaven itself*. This I humbly conceive sets the whole discourse on this head in a much clearer, easier, and more harmonious light, than I could ever gather from the numerous perplexed accounts that have been given of it.

4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law :

4 For if he were to have continued only upon earth, he could not have officiated, as a high priest, in that most glorious part of his office, which was to be performed in the *sanctuary*; since there are high priests of *Aaron's* order, that present sacrifices in the *Jewish* holy of holies, according to God's institution of that office under the law; which admits of no priest of any other tribe, and consequently not of Christ, who was of the tribe of *Judah*, to be joined with them. (See the note on *chap. vii. 13.*)

5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle. For, see (saith he) that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

5 Who minister in that tabernacle, and do the service of it, which was a typical draught and shadowy representation of the true tabernacle*, in which our blessed Lord now officiates in heaven, as an intercessory High Priest; intimations of which were given by God to *Moses*, when he received divine orders of what he should do in framing and finishing that earthly tabernacle: For when he was going about that work, God said to him, (*Ex. xxv. 40.*) Be very careful and exact in your superintendency and directions for making every, even the most minute part of the tabernacle, in which I will dwell, without the least variation from, but just according to that model, which was plainly drawn out to your view in the vision I gave you of it in the mount; which model, as it was of heavenly original, exactly answerable to the idea of it in the mind of God, was also a typical platform of the inhabitation of the Deity in the tabernacle of Christ's human nature, in which he ministers in the heavenly sanctuary.

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

6 And (sa) now our blessed Lord, in his exalted state, has evidently obtained, by a singular appointment and call of God his Father, and accordingly is now actually engaged in, a far more excellent, honourable, and beneficial office of ministration, than all that ever was exercised before him under the old covenant-dispensation; as on many other accounts, that have been already insisted on at large; (*ver. 1, 3, and chap. vii.*) so in proportion to the incomparably greater excellence and advantage of the *new covenant-dispensation*, (*ver. 8.*) † of which he is the only mediator,

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* The difficulty of this verse is so great, and the various interpretations of it, by all the commentators I have seen, are so obscure and unsatisfying, that I have humbly attempted to give what seems to me to be the most easy and intelligible account of it, in consistence with Mr. *Peirce's* criticisms on some of the words, which they that are so minded may consult; and which

indeed first led my thoughts to this sense, though it be *mostly* different from his, and from all others that I have met with.

† For understanding this and all the following verses to the end of the chapter, in confirmation of what is here asserted concerning Christ, as the Mediator of a *better covenant*, which is also called a *new covenant*, *ver. 8, 13*, it is necessary

diator, for taking away all manner of difference between God and his people, and purchasing all its spiritual

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N O T E.

necessary to consider what that *first covenant* was, which this *better and new covenant* is preferred to. It doubtless was the covenant, which God made with *Israel* at mount *Sinai*, as appears from *ver. 9.* where it is called *the covenant that he made with their fathers, when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt.* This (taking it altogether) was not merely the *covenant of works*, as containing terms of acceptance with God to *eternal life*: For God never did, nor could accept sinful creatures to eternal life upon the foot of that broken covenant. Nor was it merely the *covenant of grace*: For Christ was always the Mediator of the covenant of grace; and its promises were always, for substance, the same; and so he could not be said, by way of distinction, to be the mediator of an *absolutely better covenant*; nor could it be said to be established on *better promises* than that. I therefore apprehend that it was a *temporary covenant of peculiarity* with the *Jews*, which, considered barely as a covenant between God and them, as he was their *political king*, and they were his *national subjects*, related only to the *temporal blessings* of this life, and prosperity in the land of *Canaan*; and so was delivered to that nation, as a body-politic, under the form of a covenant of works, upon the fulfilling of which they were to inherit the blessings of that land. But considering it as a covenant which God made with the *church of Israel*, as their God, relating to their *spiritual and eternal concerns*, it contained a representation both of the original covenant of works, which they as sinners had broke, and could not keep; and of the covenant of grace, which provided for their pardon and justification. It set forth the original *covenant of works*, as the *substance* of that covenant was represented in the law of the *ten commandments*; and as the *form* of it was drawn out in declarations, that *if a man did the things contained therein, he should live by them.* (*Lev. xviii. 5.*) This was not only the condition of the covenant, as it related to *temporal blessings*, but was likewise a draught of the original *covenant of works*, relating to *spiritual blessings*, as appears from the apostle's mentioning this tenor of it, with a reference to the *Gentiles*, who never were under

the *Sinai-covenant*, (*Rom. x. 5.* and *Gal. iii. 10, 12.*) and from his speaking of *Gentile-believers* being *delivered from its curse*, by Christ's being made a *curse for them.* (*Gal. iii. 13.*) Now the design of God in thus including the *covenant of works*, in the law given to *Israel*, might be to lay before them a perfect rule of righteousness, and to shew them the necessity of a sinless conformity to it, in order to their obtaining justification in his sight by their own works; and, consequently, to convince them of their sin and danger, as they were transgressors of this original law; of the impossibility of obtaining eternal life by their own obedience to it; and of the necessity of an atonement for sin, and of a better righteousness than their own to justify them before God; and so it was *subservient* to the intimations that were given in the *Mosaic* dispensation of the *covenant of grace.* Accordingly the *Sinai-covenant* included also a representation of the *covenant of grace*, as the *promises* of a Saviour made to *Adam* immediately upon the fall, and afterwards, with further enlargement, to *Abram*, were not disannulled, or rendered ineffectual, by the *Mosaic law*; (*Gal. iii. 17.*) and as the various sacrifices, washings, and purifyings, by blood and water, were appointed in the *Sinai-covenant* itself, to *prefigure* Christ, and point the church of *Israel* to him, for cleansing from the guilt of sin by his atoning blood, and for renewing grace by his sanctifying Spirit: And God all along dealt with the believing *Israelites* according to, and saved them by this covenant, in virtue of the promise of the *seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head, and of the seed of Abram, in whom all nations should be blessed*, which promises still subsisted, and ran through the *Mosaic* dispensation, as a ground of faith in the grace of God, through the promised Messiah, for eternal life; though the carnal *Jews* turned the whole of that dispensation into a covenant of works, and sought righteousness for justification to life by their own obedience to it; and so fell short of Christ and salvation by him, as the apostle tells us, *Rom. ix. 31, 33.*—Now taking the *Sinai-covenant alone*, and by itself, as made between God and *Israel*, under the strict notion of his being their *political*

ritual and eternal blessings for them by the sacrifice of himself; and for ratifying it by his blood, as also for securing the accomplishment of all its promises, and enabling them to accept of it, and yield themselves to God according to it: This is a covenant which was formed into an authoritative establishment (*νενομισται*) upon more spiritual, advantageous and heavenly, extensive and absolute promises, (ver. 10, 11, 12.) than what were contained in the former legal administration of it at mount *Sinai*. (ver. 9.) And that *this* is a better and more perfect covenant than *that*, is evident.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

7 For if the former *Sinai* covenant had been free from all defects, as to its establishment, light, grace, and efficacy, for perfecting the state of the church, which indeed it never was designed for, how good soever it was in itself, and how fit soever to answer its particular ends, which it was undoubtedly well suited to, as God himself was the author of it: If, I say, it had not been insufficient to answer all the ends of his grace towards his people in their church-state upon earth, which is to issue in their perfection in heaven, then there certainly would have been no occasion for the wisdom of God to have contrived, nor for his people to have desired, another more spiritual and complete administration of the covenant of grace upon earth; nor would there have been any room for introducing it under the gospel-state, as it is plain there was.

8 For

N O T E.
political king; and taking it as containing a plan of the original covenant of works; the covenant of grace, under the gospel-dispensation, was entirely a new covenant, established upon better promises, relating to the heavenly inheritance, in opposition to both those considerations of the *Sinai*-covenant, in which it is spoken of as the *first* and *old* covenant: (ver. 7, 13.) But taking it in its greater latitude, with all its appendages, as including the whole of the *Mosaic* dispensation, with a reference to *Israel's* spiritual and eternal concerns: The covenant of grace, under the gospel-dispensation of it, may be called a new covenant, established on better promises, not indeed absolutely, but in certain respects; because the light, liberty, and grace contained herein, are more clearly, expressly, and abundantly promised in this, than they ever were before in that former dispensation of it; and because of the more spiritual ordinances of worship, that are contained in this, than

were in that: For as the law of love is called a new commandment, (John xiii. 34.) not absolutely a new one, since it was, for substance, contained in the Decalogue, and other parts of the Old Testament many ages before; but a new commandment, with respect to the new explications, motives, and enforce-ments, &c. with which our Lord delivered it: (See the paraphrase and note on John xiii. 34.) So the *Sinai*-covenant, in the whole compass of it, may be called the covenant of grace, clothed with the darkness and terror of the legal dispensation; and, in distinction from it, a clear, disencumbered, spiritual, and glorious edition and enlargement of it, under the gospel dispensation, may be called a new and better covenant. And that is the view in which I have chiefly considered them in this and the following verses: For unless we suppose the first covenant to have a relation to spiritual benefits in this argument, it loses its propriety and force.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come (saith the Lord) when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

8 For God having accused and reprov'd the Jews, by the prophet *Jeremiab*, (chap. xxxi. 31, &c.) for their transgressions of that covenant, which indeed did not secure their obedience, he says, Observe with attention, wonder, and joy, the days are coming and hastening apace, (*הנה ימים יקראים*) says the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, even the days of the Messiah, whom ye expect to come; when I will assuredly set up and finish (*עומדיהו*) a new covenant-dispensation of free and absolute promises; and I will establish it irrevocably and unalterably with my people, both with those that are among the ten tribes of *Israel*, and with those of the house of *Judah*, including that of *Benjamin*, who all in their turns have shamefully violated my present covenant with them: And I will make it, not with them only, that belong to either of these tribes; but with all my spiritual *Israel*, who were typified by them*; and who, under the gospel-state, whether they be Jews, or Gentiles, shall be called *the Israel of God*. (Gal. vi. 16.)

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

9 This new covenant shall not be weak and ineffectual, according to the tenor of that covenant of peculiarity, which I entered into with *Israel's* natural and covenant-ancestors, at the time when, with all the tenderness, care, and condescension of a father, I, as it were, led them, like weak and helpless children, by the hand; to deliver them, in the greatness of my power and mercy, out of all the oppressions, miseries, and slavery, under which they were in fore bondage in the land of *Egypt*. This new covenant, I say, shall not be of the same strain and constitution with that; because through the treachery of their own hearts, which that covenant of peculiarity, as such, did not absolutely provide against, they were not steadfast in it; but despised and made it void by breaking through all its sacred bonds; and I thereupon withdrew my favour and protection from them, and did not regard them, according to the tenor of that covenant, with the love, care, and tenderness of a husband† any more; as, in case of their disobedience,

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* That the true *Israel of God*, of what nation soever, are to be included under these characters, or descriptions of *Israel* and *Judah*, appears; because the persons here intended are those to whom God absolutely promised, that he would actually and efficaciously extend his renewing and pardoning grace, ver. 10, 11, 12. which cannot be said of the whole body of *Israel* after the flesh, much less of every one of them; but holds good as

to all the spiritual *Israel*, whether Jews or Gentiles, and to none but them.

† What is here rendered, *I regarded them not*, as it lies in the translation of the *Septuagint*, is rendered from the *Hebrew*, in *Jer. xxxi. 31.* the place here quoted, *Though I was an husband to them.* But as the sense is much the same, according to the view I have given of it; so Dr. *Porter* has learnedly shown that the *Hebrew* word (*בעל*) signifies

dience, I had given them reason to expect that I would not, says the Lord Jehovah, who, being highly provoked by their unfaithful behaviour, justly rejected them.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

10 This new covenant shall be of a much better and surer tenor than that: For this is the sum and substance of the covenant, which I, of my own mere grace, will make with all my spiritual Israel, first of the *Jews*, and then of the *Gentiles*, under the gospel-state, after the Old Testament-dispensation shall cease, says the great Jehovah; I will enlighten and renew their understandings, that they may behold the spirituality, purity, and extent of the moral law, by an inward operation upon their minds; and will give them a plain insight into the doctrine of salvation by the Messiah*: And I will not only set these things with the clearest and strongest evidence before their minds; but will furthermore make a thorough change upon their wills, affections, and all the practical powers of their souls, by engraving them, not (as I did the law of the ten commandments) by a miraculous impression on tables of stone; but by a supernatural gracious operation of my Spirit, who shall write them *in the fleshy tables of their hearts*, (2 Cor. iii. 3.) to guide and govern them in all their ways. And, according to this new and better covenant, I will be an all-sufficient God, in a way of protection, favour, and blessing, to them; and will own them, and perform all things for them, as their God: And they shall be inclined and enabled, by my grace, to answer their obligations to me, in a way of faith and love, duty and obedience, and of owning me in a becoming profession of my name, as my peculiar covenant-people; and so I will take effectual care that this my covenant be not liable to be made void on their part, any more than on my own, as the first covenant was.

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

11 And the light and energy of this supernatural illumination of their minds, and of this writing my laws in their hearts, shall be so clear, extensive, and powerful in all important points, that, comparatively speaking, none of them shall have like occasion, as there was under the former dark dispensation, to explain them one to another, merely by the typical and shadowy representations therein made of them; much
less

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nishes both to govern and to be a husband, and to neglect, despise, and refuse. (See his *Miscel.* chap. i.)

* By his laws we may understand primarily the moral law, but not to the exclusion of the wider sense of the word,

in which it is sometimes taken, to signify any doctrine of divine revelation, which God requires us to receive with the obedience of faith. (See the note on Rom. iii. 27.)

I shall teach every man, &c. as design-
ed to exclude all public and private, in-
dustrial, family, and social instruction;
for this is founded on the law of nature,
and is enforced in the New Testament
institution of a gospel-ministry to conti-
nue to the consummation of all things,
(*Matth. xxviii. 20. and Eph. iv. 11, 12,*
13.) and in the obligation that it has
laid upon *Christian parents to bring up*
their children in the nurture and admo-
nition of the Lord; (*Eph. vi. 4.*) as also in
less shall they depend upon, and rest in *external teach-*
ings, as many of the Jews have done, and that accord-
ing to the corrupt notions of their Rabbies:*
They shall have no need, after this manner, to say,
each of them to his neighbour and acquaintance, or
to his kindred according to the flesh, or brother in a
religious relation, Follow my instructions to bring
you to the knowledge of Christ, and of God in him:
For all *Sion's* children shall be efficaciously taught by
my Spirit, (*Is. liv. 13. and John vi. 45.*) that they
may experimentally, believingly, affectionately, and
practically know me for themselves, according to the
plain revelation I shall make of my perfections, coun-
sels, and will, and of the way of salvation through the
Messiah, in the gospel, whether they be the weakest
or the strongest believers, or whatsoever difference
there may be among them, as to the degrees of their
knowledge of me.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteous-
ness, and their sins and their iniqui-
ties will I remember no more.
12 For, that there may be no obstruction to the
free communications of my grace, and performance
of my covenant-promises to them, (*ἵνα ὡς πολλὰς τὰς*
ἀδικίας αὐτῶν) I will mercifully pardon their unright-
eous deeds, through faith in Christ's propitiation;
(*ἀναστήσας, Rom. iii. 25.*) and as to all their sinful
swervings from my commandments, (*ἀμαρτίας*) and
their departures from the rule of duty, and the chief
end of life; and all their disconformities to, and
transgressions of my law, (*ἀνομίας*) I, whose prero-
gative and glory it is to *forgive iniquity, and trans-*
gression, and sin, (*Ex. xxxiv. 7.*) even I will as en-
tirely pardon them, as if I had quite forgot them;
and will never call them to mind, so as to proceed in
judgment to condemn these my covenant-ones for
them; but will thoroughly *blot them* all out, and *cast*
them behind my back; and as *into the depths of the*
sea, (*Isa. xxxviii. 17. and xlv. 22. and Micah vii.*
19.) that they, like crimes forgotten, as well as for-
given, may never be brought to remembrance, as un-
der the legal dispensation the sins of *Israel* were eve-
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N O T E.

* We are not to suppose that *they shall not teach every man, &c.* is design-
ed to exclude all public and private, in-
dustrial, family, and social instruction;
for this is founded on the law of nature,
and is enforced in the New Testament
institution of a gospel-ministry to conti-
nue to the consummation of all things,
(*Matth. xxviii. 20. and Eph. iv. 11, 12,*
13.) and in the obligation that it has
laid upon *Christian parents to bring up*
their children in the nurture and admo-
nition of the Lord; (*Eph. vi. 4.*) as also in
the directions that are given in this very
epistle, *chap. iii. 13. and x. 24. 25.* to
private Christians, to *exhort one another*
daily, &c. This passage therefore must
be taken, either in a *comparative* sense,
as such expressions often are: (See *Isa.*
xlili. 18. Jer. xxiii. 18. and Mat. ix. 13.)
Or else with reference to *that manner of*
teaching which was used, and rested in
under the obscurities of the Old Testa-
ment-dispensation, and the corrupt in-
terpretations of the *Jewish* doctors; or
both may be included.

13 In that he faith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

ry year; (*chap. x. 3.*) nor they be upbraided with them any more.

13 Now, to wind up this important article, It is evident from all this, that as God promised to make with his people what he calls (*ver. 8.*) a new covenant, of this happy, secure, free and absolute tenor, with relation to spiritual and eternal blessings, in a better administration under the gospel-state, than that which preceded it, he thereby intimates the weakness and unprofitableness of the *Mosaic* dispensation, (*chap. vii. 18.*) and its being to be set aside and disannulled, as an antiquated thing, quite out of date: And as whatsoever is wearing out through infirmity, or is coming to a dissolution through age, like persons and garments, or any other things, that grow old, and past service, is very near unto actually expiring, or ceasing to be of any further use; so that dispensation, with all its rites, ceremonies, and institutions, will very soon be totally abolished, and put, as it were, out of sight; (*ἡ ἡμετέρα γενεά*) when, according to our Lord's prediction, (*Mai. xxiv. 1, 2.*) the temple at Jerusalem, on which the principal part of the Jewish worship and ordinances depended, will be utterly destroyed, the time of which is now just at hand.

RECOLUTIONS.

How glorious is the Lord Jesus Christ in his present ministration, as our great High Priest! He continues to exercise this office, in the tabernacle of his miraculously formed human body, at the right hand of God the Father, in the heavenly sanctuary; and there presents the merits of his atoning sacrifice in his intercession. How necessary for us, as well as honourable to him, was his entering into the holiest of all, to fulfil that important part of his office! This could not have been finished by his continuing on earth; because there were *Aaronical* priests, which order he was not of, but superior to; and none but those of that order could legally officiate in the earthly sanctuary; and heaven itself was the only proper place for him to appear in for this purpose. And how much more excellent is his sacrifice, than all the offerings of former high priests, as to its dignity, and the sanctuary in which it is presented to God! They were mere shadows of what is done by Christ; but the perfection and glory of all is accomplished in him, as the Mediator of the new covenant.—How close should we keep to divine revelation in every thing that pertains to the service of God! As *Moses* was to make all things, relating to the tabernacle, exactly according to the pattern which God had shewn him in the mount; so all our worship is to be according to *institution*, without any addition, alteration, or abatement.—How much better is the gospel-dispensation of the covenant of grace, than that which was made with *Israel* at mount *Sinai*. It has a better Mediator, and stands on the foot of better promises. Though that covenant was defective in its securities, and was broken by *Israel*, after God had wrought wonders of mercy in delivering them out of *Egypt*, and he thereupon at length cast them off as a people, to whom, by that covenant, he would no longer be a husband; yet, blessed be his holy name, he hath made with his spiritual *Israel* of all nations, under the gospel-state, a new covenant, which is perfect in its nature, and every way suited to secure its gracious design. It contains rich and free, clear, express, and absolute promises of a spiritual relation to God, as the God of his people, to be their portion, and to engage their love and duty to him; and promises of mercy to forgive all their iniquities, and never to remember any of their sins against them; and to lead them into a plain and saving acquaintance with himself in Christ, to write his law and gospel in their hearts, and to preserve them

them from utter apostacy. O the happiness and safety of the least, as well as of the most eminent of those, that are in covenant with God, who has thus graciously undertaken for himself and them! O blessed tenor of this pure unmixed dispensation of the new covenant! How unchangeable and perpetual is it! It shall never wax old or vanish away, like the *Sinai* covenant; but shall abide in full force, virtue, and vigour, as the last and most perfect administration of it in this world; and shall remain, till it issue in the everlasting happiness of all the heirs of promise in the world to come.

C H A P. IX.

The apostle, returning to his main argument, gives an account of the Jewish tabernacle and its utensils, 1,—5. Shows their use and meaning, as to their figurative services and sacrifices, 6,—10. Explains their accomplishment in Christ, 11,—22.; and inserts the necessity, superior dignity and efficacy of his priesthood and sacrifice, in an application of what he had said about those that belonged to the tabernacle under the law, 23,—28.

TEXT.

THEN verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

PARAPHRASE.

TO return then to what we have been saying about the earthly and heavenly tabernacle and sanctuary, (*chap. viii. 1,—5.*) There did indeed belong even to the *Mosaic* dispensation of the covenant, (which has been called but now (*chap. viii. 13.*) the first covenant *) various typical ordinances of God's appointment for religious worship; and a sacred magnificent tent or tabernacle, which, inclusive of the whole fabric, may be styled in a lax sense the sanctuary for the celebration of those ordinances: And which was made of earthly materials by the hands of men; and, exclusive of its figurative meaning, was of a worldly nature, as well as that its station was in this world †, in opposition to that which is heavenly, (whereof we shall afterwards speak, *ver. 6, &c.*)

For there was a tabernacle made; the

2 For, suitable to the nature and design of that carnal dispensation, there was an earthly tabernacle ‡ prepared

NOTES.

* Many Greek copies read (*πρωτη*) the first tabernacle; but that seems to make a tautology in this and the beginning of the next verse; I therefore choose to keep to our, and many other ancient versions, which properly enough supply the word *covenant*, referring back to the last verse of the preceding chapter, which speaks of the first covenant (*πρωτη*) being made old, as is manifestly intended, though the word *covenant* be not there expressed in the Greek; and here it is shown what were the ordinances pertaining to that covenant. The curious reader may consult

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‡ The sanctuary, *ver. 1.* and the tabernacle in the beginning of this verse, apparently mean the same thing; these terms being often used promiscuously,

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the first wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the sanctuary.

prepared and built, according to the pattern shewn to Moses in the mount, (*chap. viii. 5.*) which consisted of two principal parts, as the temple also afterwards did. In one part was the candlestick * with burning lamps of oil; which might prefigure the fulness of spiritual light that is in Christ, to be communicated by his Spirit, in the administration of gospel-ordinances to the church, (in which God dwells, as in his spiritual temple or tabernacle) according to the measure of the gift of Christ, (*Ephes. iv. 7.*) who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and has seven stars in his right hand: (*Rev. i. 12, 13, 16, 20. and iv. 5.*) And there was in this court of the tabernacle the table and the shew-bread † upon it; which may point us to the communion that believers have with God in Christ, and the provision he has made for them in him, as the bread of life. (*John vi. 35, 51.*) These were some of the chief furniture that was placed in, and peculiar to the services of, this first part of the tabernacle; which was called the *sanctuary*, or *holy place*, (*Ex. xxvi. 33.*) as it was consecrated to the honour and worship of God, and sanctified by his presence; and was the ordinary court, in which the priests officiated about holy things.

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle

3 And the second part of this sacred edifice lay toward the west, beyond the second veil, which hung down,

N O T E S.

one for the other; and they are both to be understood here, as taking in the whole of that sacred edifice, which bears the name of the *tabernacle*, ver. 8. and *chap. viii. 5.*; though at other times they are used variously, and the *sanctuary* may signify only one part of it, and the *tabernacle* another, as in the last clause of this verse, and *ver. 3.*

* The weight of this candlestick was a talent of beaten gold all of a piece; out of its shaft or shank proceeded six branches, three on each side, and a seventh in the middle; on the top of every one of them was a lamp, into all of which was put pure oil of olives, with a wick or piece of cotton for burning; and they were trimmed and recruited, by the priest in waiting, every morning and evening. (*See Exod. xxv. 31.—39. and xxvii. 20.*)

† This table was made of *stittim* wood, which some suppose to have been *mahogany*; because no tree was so likely, as this, to afford such vast boards of ten cubits long, and a cubit and a half broad, as were cut out of this wood for the tabernacle, (*Ex. xxxvi. 20, 21.*) and abundance of *mahogany* trees are said

to grow not far from those parts. The table, we are speaking of, was two cubits, or three feet in length, and one cubit, or a foot and a half in breadth, and a cubit and half, or two feet three inches in height, and was covered over with pure gold, which had a sort of *ogee*, or an edge of a rising golden border, round about the top, something like our tea-boards, and stood on four feet. (*Exod. xxv. 23.—26.*)—The *shew-bread*, which was probably so called, because it stood continually, as it were, before the face of the Lord in the holy place, was made of the finest wheat into loaves or cakes, each of which was to contain two *tenth deals*, which made about three wine pints of flour; *twelve* of which loaves, according to the number of the tribes of *Israel*, were placed upon the table in two rows, or *sets in order*, (*מסודות*)

six one upon another, in each row; and fresh loaves were set there every sabbath day, when the priest took the old ones away, of which, by the law, none but *Aaron* and his sons were to eat. (*Lev. xxiv. 5.—9. compared with Mat. xii. 4.*)

tabernacle which is called the holiest of all:

down, like a large curtain of curious workmanship, to separate between that and the first court; (*Ex. xxvi. 31,—35.*) and is called, by way of eminence, *the holy of holies*, as being the most holy place of all; because there God manifested himself in the most illustrious emblems of glory, and the high priest only might enter into it with the blood of the sacrifices, and officiate there, and *that* only once a-year on the great day of atonement: Which was typical of heaven, and of our great High Priest's entering into it, through the vail of his flesh, with his own blood, to make intercession for us. (*ver. 12. and chap. x. 20.*)

4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

4 And the sacred utensils, which belonged to the *holiest of all*, were these. One of them was the altar of incense *, that was overlaid with fine gold, from which the high priest on the great atonement day, having taken *the golden censer*, and fire from the altar of burnt-offering, and then, having filled his hands with the incense, directly entered into the most holy place; and, putting the incense upon the fire, a cloud ascended from it, and covered the mercy-seat; (*Lev. xvi. 12, 13.*) which might signify the extreme sufferings and fragrant intercession of Christ: And in the holy of holies itself was a small chest of shittim wood, covered over within and without with pure gold; the length of which was two cubits and a half, or three feet nine inches; and the breadth one cubit and a half, or two feet three inches; and its height the same: (*Ex. xxxvii. 1, 2.*) And this was called the *ark of the covenant*, and of the *testimony*, (*Ex. xxv. 16. and xl. 3, 5.*) as it was a symbol of God's covenant with *Israel*, and a witness for or against them, according to their obedience or disobedience to the law that was kept therein; and may be considered as

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* Some have supposed that the *golden censer* was kept in the *holy of holies*, just within the vail, by the turning aside of which the high priest took it to burn incense before the Lord on the anniversary day of atonement; and that the other censers for the common use of the priests were of silver: But others observe that the *golden censer* (*ἄρτεμιον*) may signify the *altar of incense* which was overlaid with gold. And I am inclined to think, with them, that it is so to be understood here; chiefly, because there is otherwise no mention at all of this grand utensil of the tabernacle: And though it stood in the court of the priests for their daily use, as well as the candlestick and the table with the shew-bread;

yet as the apostle's principal view in the present discourse is to compare those things with Christ, that most immediately relate to the *high priest*; and the golden altar of incense, which stood just before the vail, was of necessary and important use in the *high priest's* ministration on the expiation-day, (*Lev. xvi. 12, 13.*) He therefore may be supposed to reckon it among the things that pertained to the immediate service of the most holy place; but does not say, as he doth of all the following particulars, that it was in the *holiest of all*, only that the holiest of all *had it* (*ἔχουσα*) with respect to use, though not to situation.

directing them to Christ, who came to fulfil the law, and it the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. (Mat. v. 17. and Rom. x. 4.) Hard by the ark * was placed the golden pot, containing a parcel of the manna, with which God fed Israel in the wilderness; and which, according to divine order, (Ex. xvi. 33, 34.) was miraculously kept from putrefaction, as a perpetual memorial before the Lord in the sanctuary, and was typical of Christ, the true and ever-living bread. (John vi. 48,—51.) There was also Aaron's miraculous rod, with which he and Moses wrought many wonders, and which, though a dry stick, budded, blossomed, and brought forth almonds all in one night, to shew that God had chosen the house of Aaron to the priesthood, in preference to all others; and it was afterwards preserved, by no less a miracle, in its flourishing state before the ark of the testimony, for a continual memorial: (Numb. xvii. 2,—10.) In correspondence hereunto, Christ came forth, not without the most extraordinary miracle in his conception, as a rod out of the withered stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots, and as a root out of a dry ground; (Is. xi. 1. and liii. 2.) and God has manifested him to be our only gospel High Priest, whose office shall ever remain in a prosperous state. And there were in the ark itself the two tables of the moral law, consisting of the ten commandments, which the Lord wrote on the two tables of stone, that were cut out by Moses, (Deut. x. 1, 2.) and contained the covenant, to which all its other articles related, that God made with Israel in Horeb; (Deut. v. 1,—12. and 27,—33.) and these being put into the ark might intimate, that the moral law should ever continue to be an unchangeable rule

N O T E.

* It is expressly said, 1 Kings viii. 9. *There was nothing in the ark, save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb*; and it is no small difficulty to reconcile this with our apostle's saying, *Wherein* (if he meant in the ark) *was the golden-pot, that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant*. The most common way has been to suppose that, as the preposition (*in*) rendered *in*, sometimes also signifies *by*, answerable to *beth* in the Hebrew, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod were put, not *into*, but *by* the ark in a coffer adjoining to it. (See Deut. xxxi. 26. and 1 Sam. vi. 8.) Accordingly the pot of manna and Aaron's rod were said to be laid before the testimony,

and before the ark. (Exod. xvi. 34. and Numb. xvii. 10.) But as here is but one preposition, and that goes immediately before the golden pot, &c. Others think it to be a forced construction to make it signify *by* with relation to the golden pot, and Aaron's rod, and *in*, with relation to the tables of the covenant, which were certainly in the ark itself: And therefore they apprehend, which I think best solves the difficulty, that *wherein* refers not to the ark, but to that part of the tabernacle (*ovnn*) which is called just before (*ver. 3.*) the holiest of all, (*vn*) *ver. 4. in which tabernacle* all these utensils were placed, as Mr. Peirce supposes the golden censer also was.

rule of all holy obedience in the hands of Christ; and should be fulfilled by him, as a covenant, for the justification of all that believe in him. (*Mat. v. 17, 18.* and *Rom. x. 4.*)

5 And over or above this ark were two stately figures called cherubim*, of a glorious winged form, made of pure gold, which represented holy angels; and one of them with one, and the other with another of his wings, that met together in the middle, overspread the whole top of the mercy-seat at some height above it; the cherubim being placed at each end, and beaten out of the same mass of fine gold with the mercy-seat itself, which was an oblong square plate of solid gold, exactly fitted in length and breadth to the dimensions of the ark, and laid upon it as a lid or covering to it; and altogether made a representation of a magnificent throne, on which God appeared in the *Shechinah*, (an illustrious emblem of the divine glory) as dwelling between the cherubim, and shining forth from thence; (*Psa. lxxx. 1.*) and as meeting and communing with *Moses*, and giving forth his holy oracles from off the mercy-seat. (*Ex. xxv. 22.* and *Numb. vii. 89.*)† Answerable hereunto, God, who is attended with angelic spirits in heaven, shines forth on his throne of grace, from whence he reveals his will, and communes with his people, through Jesus Christ, who is the gospel High Priest, and the great propitiation for sin, (*Rom. iii. 25.*) as his atonement is fully commensurate to all the demands of the broken law, and was typified by the propitiatory or mercy-seat, as a complete covering interposed between God, who appears on his throne of grace, and the law as laid up in the ark; and so covered the transgressions of it from his avenging eye, that true believers in his Son might not be dealt with in a way of justice for them, according to their deserts. But of these things, how significant soever they be, it is not so much our business at present particularly to discourse; with regard to their mystical

NOTES.

* Of what particular form these cherubim were, is very uncertain; but we are told that they were made of fine gold, and that there were two of them, whose wings were stretched upwards, over all the mercy-seat, they being placed at each end of it, with their faces looking one toward the other, and downward toward the mercy-seat, *Exod. xxv. 18.*—*20.* And they appear to have been designed to represent the holy angels, who

are Christ's attendants, and God's ministers to do his will; and who, in a beautiful allusion to the posture of these figures, are said to pry and search, and like persons stooping down, (*παραυχαι*) to look into the mysteries of redemption by Jesus Christ. *1 Pet. i. 12.*

† See the description of the tabernacle, and of all its utensils, more at large in *Univerf. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 651.—659. fol.

6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God:

7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.

cal meaning*, as it is to explain the ordinances of divine worship, relating to the tabernacle, to which we shall proceed, as the principal point in view.

6 Now the whole fabric of this sacred house, together with all its utensils, being thus thoroughly prepared and finished, (*κατασκευασμένων*) according to the pattern shewn to Moses in the mount, (*chap. viii. 5.*) The ordinary priests went every day, and at all times, as occasions required, into the first part of the tabernacle, which was called the holy place, in distinction from the holiest of all; (*Ex. xxvi. 33.*) and there they performed all the services that belonged to their office, relating to the worship of God; such as offering sacrifices, dressing the lamps, and burning incense on the golden altar.

7 But the high priest, and he only, who was the most eminent figure of Christ, went into the second part of the tabernacle, which lay within the veil, and was called the holiest of all; (*ver. 3.*) and he himself went into it, not every day, as the ordinary priests did into the first part of the tabernacle; but only on one day of every year†, namely, the great day of atonement; when even he could not enter with acceptance, to fulfil his sacred office there, without the blood of the expiatory sacrifices, which he had offered by slaying them before; and whose blood he went to present before the Lord, and sprinkle on the mercy-seat in the sanctuary, first for his own iniquities, as he was a sinner like the rest of mankind, and so needed a sacrifice for the remission of his own sins, and to sanctify him to the office of acting as a high priest for the people; and then to make atonement for all the iniquities and transgressions, (*Lev. xvi. 21.*) not of the whole world, but of the whole church

NOTES.

* This recital of the various utensils of the tabernacle intimates that there was a mystical meaning in them, though the apostle did not intend to insist upon it, as not being necessary to his immediate design.

† Though the high priest entered into the holy of holies only on one day of the year, which was the great day of atonement, or the tenth day of the seventh month, *Lev. xvi. 29, 30.* or in the month which the Jews call *Tisri*, and answers partly to our September, and partly to our October, and was the seventh month of their ecclesiastical year; yet he entered into it twice or thrice, at least, on that day. Two of these times the apostle here takes notice of: (*ver. 12, 13.*)

One was, when he brought into it the blood of a bullock, as a sin-offering; and of a ram, as a burnt offering for himself and his house: (*Lev. xvi. 3, 6.*) The other was, when he carried into it the blood of a goat for a sin-offering for the people: (*Lev. xvi. 11, 15.*) And after the bullock was killed, but before its blood was sprinkled on the mercy-seat, the high priest entered with burning incense, to prepare the way by the cloud that rose from it, and covered the mercy-seat. (*Lev. xvi. 13, 14.*) And some suppose that he entered a fourth time in the service of the scape goat, which he presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with it. (See *Dr. Owen* on the place.

church of *Israel*, which were typical of the true *Israel* of God; whose sins might be called their *errors*, as they proceeded from ignorance, through an erroneous judgment and perverted will; and as they thereby erred in heart and life from God's ways. (*Psal.* xc. 10.) All this plainly intimated that there is no expiation of sin, nor entering into the gracious presence of God, and finding acceptance with him, but by the atoning blood of the great sacrifice of Christ, which those sacrifices typified; and by his intercession in virtue of that blood.

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

8 By this entrance of the high priest *alone* into the holy of holies, and *that* only on one day of the year with atoning blood, while all the common priests, and all the people were denied this privilege, the Holy Ghost, who by divine suggestion directed *Moses* to make this settlement of that service, and indited the scriptures which record it, evidently shewed, (*ἀδελφούς*) that there was no liberty of access for them into that sacred place, which contained the eminent tokens of God's gracious presence*; and that the way of believers free access to the throne of grace in this world, and of their personal entrance into heaven itself, through faith in the blood of Christ, was not so clearly and openly revealed, as it now is under the gospel-dispensation, while the frame of that first tabernacle, with the services pertaining to it, (which were afterwards also performed in the temple) continued to be established and observed by divine institution, as suited only to the typical state of the church of *Israel*.

9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service

9 Which tabernacle, with all its furniture and services, was, according to divine institution, a sort of parabolical (*παροβολαὶς ἢ το καίρον*) or imperfect figurative representation of good things then to come†, (*chap.* x. 1.) until those things themselves should be more thoroughly explained, and perfectly fulfilled, as they now are under the present gospel-dispensation; in

N O T E S.

* Some think that by the *holiest* of all is here meant the holy of holies in the earthly tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all, *ver.* 3. Others refer it to the immediate *gracious presence* of God in Christ, the tokens of which were there eminently exhibited in the ark, the cherubim of glory, and the mercy-seat, which are spoken of, *ver.* 4, 5. And others understand it of *heaven* itself, which was typified by the holy of holies, and is, by way of eminence, styled the *holy place*, (*ver.* 12.) and the *holiest*, into which believers have now

boldness to enter, by the blood of Jesus. (*Chap.* x. 19.) And as it is difficult to say, which of these were precisely intended by the apostle, we may with good consistency take them all in.

† The word *then* is not in the original, though our translators have not distinguished it, as usual in such cases, by putting it in a different character; and therefore the *time present* may by the construction refer, either to the former time of the *legal services* in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple; or to the present time of the *gospel state*.

service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience,

in which former time, and in the tabernacle then erected, various offerings were presented to the Lord, (some of which were without blood, and others, of a more directly propitiatory nature, were slain sacrifices) which, though they availed for the purifying of the flesh from ceremonial defilement, (*ver. 13.*) and for taking off the temporal punishment that *Israel's* sins exposed them to, as they were members of the civil community under God, as their political king*; yet they had not worth or virtue enough in themselves to atone for moral evil, or to take away the guilt of sin, with respect to its obligation to eternal punishment; from any of the worshippers (*chap. x. 1.*) that presented, or were concerned in those sacrifices; nor were they sufficient to satisfy them that the justice of God was effectually appeased, or to purge their consciences from a disquieting and condemning sense of guilt, and of obnoxiousness thereby to divine wrath in the world to come: All the use they had, with reference hereunto, was only to lead their faith to the great and true propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, which was typified, and pointed to, by these ceremonial offerings;

10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

10 Which, to perfect the sacrifice†, were attended with only meat and drink offerings, and various sorts of washings of the sacrifices, and of the priests and people, and with almost numberless other ceremonial rites, which may be called carnal ordinances, as they sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh, and were apt to raise gross notions of spiritual things in carnal minds: And being insufficient to purify the conscience, and to perfect the state of the church, they were never designed to be always continued in their use; but were laid, as a yoke of bondage, upon the

N O T E S.

* It appears from *chap. x. 1.*—6. that legal offerings and sacrifices were utterly insufficient to take away the moral guilt of sin, and the punishment due for it, as committed against God, as the Lord of conscience and supreme Lawgiver, and Judge of all. But they were fit and lively types of the complete and perfect atonement, which was made for that purpose by the sacrifice of Christ; because they were a proper atonement for political guilt, which was contracted by transgressing the laws of the theocracy, under the formal notion of the laws of God's civil government, as the King of *Israel*. Accordingly, when any one had defrauded another of his property, he was to restore it in full value, and

bring his trespass offering to the Lord: Whereupon it was said, the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord, and it shall be forgiven him, for any thing of all that he had done in trespassing therein. (*Lev. vi. 2.—7.*)

† Which stood is not in the original; and therefore the skill of the critics has been much exercised to little purpose in fixing the connection of this with the preceding verse. But as the learned know where to consult them, I shall not puzzle the common reader with them, which would be to no profit; but have given such a view of the connection as I take to be least forced, and most easy to be understood.

the people under the law, (*Acts* xv. 10.) only for a certain season, till the days of the Messiah, when all things should be reduced to their proper order and regulation, for reforming all defects in the worship of God, and setting it up in a complete state of spirituality and holiness, light and grace, to his glory, and the salvation of the church.

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

11 But the Messiah, who was all along promised and expected, as he that should come, (*Matth.* xi. 3.) has now actually appeared in his incarnate state, as an high priest, to accomplish the services in the most effectual manner, that were only shadowed out by those ceremonial ordinances; and so to procure all the blessings of the gospel state, which were then future benefits, and all the blessings of glory, which are still to be enjoyed in a better world to come. And this he has done, as having officiated in, and by means of, a much more noble and excellent tabernacle than that in which the legal priests ministered, even in, and by his own human body; (see the note on *chap.* viii. 2.) which is greater, not indeed in bulk and measure, but in worth and dignity, and is every way better fitted for, and more perfectly answers the end of, his priestly ministration, than that earthly tabernacle possibly could; and which was not, like the fabric of that tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple, made by the skill and workmanship of men. (*Exod.* xxxi. 2,—7. and xxxvi. 1. and 2 *Chron.* ii. 5, 6, 7.) No, this more excellent tabernacle is not of human structure, as all material buildings are; but was formed by the immediate miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, without the operation of any man whatsoever. (*Luke* i. 34, 35.)

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

12 And the sacrifice which he offered on earth, and its blood, by the merit of which he entered into the sanctuary above, are every way more excellent than those under the law: For it was not by the blood of goats, bulls, or calves, such as were offered for atonement by the typical high priest according to the law, before their blood was carried into the holy of holies; (*Lev.* xvi. 3,—6.) but it was in virtue of his own most precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, (*1 Pet.* i. 19.) that he entered through the veil of his own flesh; (*chap.* x. 20.) not, like the former high priests, into an earthly sanctuary on one day of every year; but, once for all, (*chap.* x. 10.) into the most holy place, even heaven itself, to present his own person, together with the merit of his perfect and ever-available sacrifice before, and so to appear for us in, the immediate presence of God; (*ver.* 24, 25, 26.) he having, antecedent thereunto,

by the sacrifice of himself, which he offered on the cross, purchased, and so effectually obtained, by the price of his own blood, not merely a year's reprieve or pardon, as was annually done in a figurative way by the typical high priest; but having found (*supra*) a complete and ever-abiding satisfaction to divine justice, for the forgiveness of all trespasses, and an everlasting deliverance from all the bondage we were under to sin, and Satan, and the law, which bound us over to the wrath of God; and having thereby procured a right and title to an eternal inheritance of all blessedness and glory, which is included in the redemption that he acquired for us, who believe in him.

13. For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh;

13. For if the typical blood of such mean worthless animals, as *bulls* and *goats*, which were offered in sacrifice by divine appointment under the law, and the ashes of an heifer, which was never yoked, and was consumed by fire as a sin-offering; If these ashes, mingled with running water, being sprinkled upon persons that were under any legal defilement by the dead, or by any other means, are sufficient, according to the institutions of the *Mosaic* law, to cleanse those persons from the external ceremonial impurities of their bodies, and to give them a re-admission to public worship in the tabernacle, and into the congregation of the Lord, from which they were excluded on account of such defilement; (*Numb.* chap. xix.)

14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

14. How much more may we be assured that there is an efficacy; yea, how much greater virtue must there needs be, in the antitypical blood of so glorious an one as Christ, God-man, our High Priest and sacrifice too, who offered; not brute-animals, but himself, even his whole divinely dignified human nature, without the least flaw or moral defilement in it, as an expiatory sacrifice of a sweet-smelling favour to God; (*Ephes.* v. 2.) and who did this, through the infinite dignity and support of his own immortal deity, which, like the altar, sanctified the gift; * and through the anointing of the holy and eternal Spirit, which was given to him, as Man and Mediator, without measure, and animated him to undergo all his sufferings, with the utmost readiness and submission to his Father's will, with an entire trust and confidence in him, with fervent zeal for his glory, and with the most amazing love and compassion to his people? How much

N O T E.

* By the eternal Spirit some understand the divine nature of Christ; and others the Holy Spirit, as some copies read it. But it being hard to say which of these may be most directly intended; and his divine nature, and the Holy Spirit being, in their respective ways of operation, very nearly concerned in this offering of himself, the paraphrase has taken in a consideration of both.

much more evidently and prevalently, I say, beyond all ceremonial purifyings of the flesh, shall the noble blood, inclusive of all the obedience and sufferings unto death, of such a divine person, be efficacious, in the application of it to your consciences through faith therein, to cleanse them from the guilt and defilement of all your iniquities; which may be called *dead works*, as they proceed from spiritually dead principles, are altogether unprofitable and abominable, like dead carcases, and deserve and tend unto eternal death? And how much more effectual must it be, to free your conscience from dreadful apprehensions of condemnation and wrath on their account; and to give it a holy confidence toward God, as your reconciled God, that ye may worship him with freedom and delight, as the only living and true God, who will not accept of dead performances; and that ye may pay all cheerful obedience to him here, as those who are pardoned and accepted of him through the atoning death of his Son, till ye shall perfectly serve and enjoy him in the heavenly sanctuary hereafter?

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

15 And for bringing about this great end, Jesus has undertaken, and is engaged in, the office of the mediator of the new and better covenant, which has been spoken of; (*chap. viii. 6, 8.* see the notes there) and which carries the nature of a *testamentary disposition**, that by means, not of legal sacrifices, but of his meritorious death for the remission of sin, and deliverance of sinners from the guilt and punishment of those iniquities, which were committed under the Old, as well as New Testament, they who are effectually called to the faith of Christ, whether before or after his death, might, in virtue of it, be made partakers of the great promise to *Abraham*, that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed; (*Gen. xxii. 18.*) which contained a promise of all the blessings of

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grace

N O T E.

* Dr. Owen observes on this text, that the *Seventy* constantly render the Hebrew word (בְּרִית) by the Greek word, (διαθήκη) which is here translated a *testament*, and at other times a *covenant*; that there is no other word than that (בְּרִית) in the Hebrew language to express a *testament* by; and that it is often used to express a *free promise*, which has more of the nature of a *testament* than of a *proper covenant*, and best agrees to the nature of God's covenant with man. He further observes, that though the *Sinai-covenant*, so far as it was a *covenant*, was confirmed by

the blood of sacrifices; yet as in those sacrifices death was comprised, it was to confirm the testamentary grant of the inheritance of the land of *Canaan*; for death was necessary to the confirmation of a *testament*, which then could only be in type and representation: The testator himself was not to die for the establishment of a typical inheritance; but Christ, as Mediator of the New Testament, was to die, not as the high priests of old did a natural death for themselves, but as the sacrifice died, that was slain and offered for others. (See p. 339. and 407. See also our note on *chap. vii. 22.*)

grace and glory, even unto the obtaining of a temporal possession, like the land of *Canaan*, but of an everlasting inheritance of heavenly happiness, which was typified by that land, and was promised in that covenant to all his spiritual seed. (*Gal. iii. 18, 29.*)

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 16 And Jesus being not only the mediator of reconciliation with God, to purchase the blessings of the new covenant, and ratify it by his blood; but being also a *testator* to bequeath them, as legacies in his last will and testament, (*Luke xxii. 29.* and *John xiv. 27.*) his bloodshed, answerable to this character, was to be unto death: For in the very nature and reason of things, and according to the universal law and custom of all nations, when any last will or testament is made, the death of the party, who therein disposed of his own goods, is necessary, and the proof of it must be produced, (*φύσις*) to give it effect, in order to its being executed. This is a plain case.

17 For as a testament is the authentic signification of men's last will, with regard to the disposal of their property, in the time, way, and manner, which they appoint for it to take place after their decease; so it is valid and pleadable, only after the persons that made it are dead; because (*ver.*) as long as the testator himself is alive, the testamentary disposition is revocable at his will and pleasure, and gives no legal title to any one, that would pretend to claim or inherit under it: But when once he is dead, all its lawful bequests to every legatee are irrevocably established, so as not to be altered or disannulled. (*Gal. iii. 15.*) It was therefore necessary for Christ to die, as, for many other reasons, so particularly that the promises of the covenant, which he also made his testamentary gift, might be in full force to all that claim by faith under him: But he so far excels all human testators, that as the merit of his death reached back to Old Testament believers, (*ver. 15.*) and as he never died in his whole person; so he, as Man and Mediator, now lives in heaven, to take care of the faithful execution of his own will, and gives the whole inheritance of grace and glory to every heir of promise, without losing his own property in it, and without dividing the inheritance, so as that one should have one part, and another another part; but that each may have the whole, as if none but himself were to enjoy it.

18 Whereupon, neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

18 This manner of ratifying the gospel-covenant is somewhat answerable to the way in which the *Sinai*-covenant was consecrated or solemnly separated to sacred use, and became valid, as it was the instrument whereby the terms of that special relation were settled,

which God entered into with his people Israel; to which covenant was not established without the blood of the typical sacrifices, that had been slain; much less could the new covenant, which has more directly the nature of a testament, be confirmed and rendered authentic for taking effect, without the death and bloodshed of Christ. (See the note on ver. 15.)

19. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, 19. And that the typical blood was used for this, together with other purposes of purification and remission of sins, appears from the various sprinklings of it: For as *Moses* was appointed of God, and accepted by the people, to be a spokesman, and sort of mediator, in all the transactions that passed between God and them; (*Exod. xx. 18, 19. and Deut. v. 22,—28.*) so when he had recited all the words of the Lord contained in the moral law, which was written on two tables of stone, and all the judgments (*Exod. xxiv. 3.*) contained in the institutions, which peculiarly related to them as a church and nation, and had been specified just before; (*chaps. xx,—xxiii.*) and when the people thereupon said, as with one voice, *All the words which the Lord hath said will we do;* (*Ex. xxiv. 3.*) then *Moses* wrote all the words of the law in a book; (*ver. 4, 7.*) and, in testimony of its ratification, * he took the blood of calves

N O T E.

* Several things are mentioned in this verse that are not found in the account given of the dedication of the covenant. *Exod. xxiv. 3,—8.* But, as the apostle wrote by divine inspiration, we may be sure of the truth of what he asserts concerning them, in which he does not confine himself to what was recorded on that particular occasion; but takes in various things, that suited his purpose, relating to the use of sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices, where-ever they are to be met with in the law of *Moses*; and gives such an account of them as was proper to explain them.—We only read in *Exod. xxiv. 5.* of the offering of burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings of oxen; these oxen the apostle calls calves, as the word (פרים) in the Hebrew signifying any cattle of the herd, whether young or old, and the Greek word (βοῦς) used by the apostle, might have been rendered heifers; and as we are not told in the history what all the offerings on that occasion were, there is no difficulty in allowing that there were goats, as well as bullocks, since goats are mentioned among the peace-offerings made by fire, and the sin-offerings, whose blood was sprinkled: (*Lev. iii. 3,*

12. and ix. 15, 18. and xvi. 15,—19.) And though sprinkling the blood with water, and scarlet-wool, and hyssop is not recorded in the account of the dedication of the covenant, but only the sprinkling of the blood, which was put into basins for that purpose; (*Exod. xxiv. 6, 8.*) yet as when the blood was sprinkled in lesser quantities, it was easily done by dipping the finger into it, (*Lev. viii. 15. and xvi. 14.*) so when greater quantities were to be sprinkled, it was mixed with running, or spring-water; to prevent its congealing, and keep it liquid: And that it might be scattered in drops, it was sprinkled with an instrument composed of scarlet-wool, to take up and retain a sufficient portion of the blood, and a bunch of hyssop to scatter it. This is called taking hyssop and scarlet, (which the apostle interprets as meant of scarlet-wool) and dipping them in blood and running water, and sprinkling a house infected with the leprosy for its cleansing: (*Lev. xiv. 51, 52.*)—And though sprinkling the book is not expressed in the history, but only sprinkling the altar and the people; (*Exod. xxiv. 7, 8.*) yet as the apostle tells us that *Moses* sprinkled the book, and

calves and of goats, that had been offered for burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and put it into basins; (*Exod. xxiv. 5, 6.*) and, having mixed the blood with spring-water to make it fluid, he took a parcel of scarlet wool to imbibe the liquor, and a bunch of hyssop to disperse it in drops; and by this means he sprinkled one half of it on the book of the law, as it lay upon the altar, to consecrate it to sacred use, as containing the covenant, in which God was one party; and sprinkled the other half upon the whole congregation of the people, or at least upon their representatives, as the other party concerned in that covenant, and thereby purified them from all their legal uncleanness, and ratified the covenant between God and them; which carried a typical intimation, that the new covenant of gospel-grace, between God and all true believers, should be confirmed by the blood of Christ's sacrifice, which is, by way of eminence, the *blood of sprinkling*, (*chap. xii. 24.*) and the virtue of which, in its application, is effectual for cleansing from the guilt and defilement of sin, by pardoning and sanctifying grace, as was typified by *that* blood and water, and was afterward signified by the blood and water which came out of Christ's pierced side. (*John xix. 34, 35.* See the note there.)

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

20 While Moses was in this manner sprinkling the blood, and showing it to the people, he said to them, (*Exod. xxiv. 8.*) *Behold the blood of the covenant, (i. e.) This blood is a token of its confirmation by* divine

N O T E.

and the history speaks of his having recited and wrote all the words of the law, and then sprinkled the blood on the altar, (*ver. 3, 4, 6.*) there is no just reason to doubt, but that the book was laid upon the altar, before the altar was sprinkled; and so the book was sprinkled together with it. And whereas in the text of *Exod. xxiv. 8.* Moses is said to have sprinkled the blood on the people, the apostle tells us, by way of interpretation, that it was upon all the people, either in their representatives, which some suppose were the twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel, mentioned *Exod. xxiv. 4.*; or the seventy elders, mentioned *ver. 1.* who were the chief heads of Israel; or else upon as many of the people as were near him; and, perhaps, upon every individual of them, as there might be opportunity for it in their turns, even upon all the men, women, and children, who were included in the covenant made with Israel at Sinai, (*Deut. xxxi. 11,*

12, 13.) as they had also been before in the covenant made with Abraham, *Gen. xvii. 7, 10.* in which the females were included in the males.—Dr. Owen, in a remark on the verse before us, says, "The communication of the benefits of the death of Christ, unto sanctification, is called the *sprinkling of his blood*, *1 Pet. i. 2.*; and our apostle comprises all the effects of it, unto that end, under the name of the *blood of sprinkling*, *chap. xii. 24.* And I fear (says he) that those who have used the expression with some contempt, when applied by themselves unto the sign of the communication of the benefit of the death of Christ in baptism, have not observed that reverence of holy things that is required of us. For this *symbol of sprinkling* was that which God himself chose and appointed, as a meet and apt token of the communication of covenant-mercy, that is, of his grace in Christ Jesus to our souls."

divine authority, between God and you, whereby his faithfulness, on one hand, for fulfilling his promises; and your obedience, on the other, for performing its duties, are engaged, according to what I have published unto you from the Lord, and ye have consented to, that ye may be dealt with according to its tenor.

Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

21 Furthermore, when the tabernacle was framed and furnished with its appointed vessels of service, * *Moses* also ordered that it should be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifices, and that this should be repeatedly done on the great day of atonement every year; and that, together with the tabernacle, all the utensils pertaining to it, and to the ministrations of the priests in it, should be thereby cleansed from the defilements of the people, and sanctified for religious services; even as the mercy-seat, and altar of incense, annually were by the high priest on every return of that day, because of the sins of the people, that they might be purified from the legal uncleannels which had been contracted thereby. (*Lev. xvi. 14.—19.*)

22 And

N O T E.

* *The tabernacle* was not erected, nor all its vessels formed, till some time after *Moses* received the law, and the fore-mentioned solemn transactions had passed; And therefore the sprinkling of blood to sanctify the tabernacle and its utensils could not be at that time; but must relate to what was afterward to be done, probably at the first setting up of the tabernacle; since *Moses*, giving an account of that, (*Exod. xl. 9. 10. 11.*) ordered the tabernacle, and all things therein to be hallowed with anointing oil; after which follows the consecration of *Aaron* and his sons by anointing them: (*ver. 13.—15.*) And as the anointing of them for their consecration was attended with the sprinkling of blood, according to the order about it in *Exod. xxviii. 4.* compared with *chap. xxix. 20. 29.* it is reasonable to conclude, that the anointing of the tabernacle, and all its vessels, were so too; and *Josephus* says, (*Antiq. lib. III. cap. 8. Hud. edit.*) that *Moses* consecrated the tabernacle, and all its vessels, by anointing them with oil, and by the blood of slain bulls and rams.—However, I rather think, with *Dr. Owen* and some others, that the apostle here refers to what was annually done by the high priest on the great day of atonement: For his principal design in this discourse, as appears from what follows to the end of the chapter, was to run the

comparison between *Christ's* performances in the execution of his office in *heaven*, and the services of the high priest in the sanctuary, on that day. And though *Moses* did not sprinkle the tabernacle and the vessels with his own hands, on the anniversary day of atonement; yet it may be spoken of as *his doing it*, because it was done by the high priest, according to divine appointment in the law delivered by him: For *Moses* often signifies his law, as in *Luke xxiv. 27. 44. Acts xv. 21.* and *2 Cor. iii. 15.* And so the apostle, having finished his account of what was done at the dedication of the covenant, proceeds, in this and the next verse, to other standing ordinances of sprinkling the blood of sacrifices for purification and atonement, the more fully to shew how they shadowed out the virtue of *Christ's* atoning blood for taking away sin; which he insists upon at large in the next chapter. And that he in this verse speaks of things done at a different time from those, which were just before mentioned, is suggested by the way of his introducing it, saying, *Moreover, likewise he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle, &c.* And then in the next verse, he says, *Almost all things are by the law, purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission;* thereby intimating what was the ordinary continued practice all along under the law.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood: and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

22 And so important was the blood of sacrifices to that dispensation, that almost every thing relating to purification, and indeed all things, except those that were to be purified by fire and water, * and had no moral impurity in them, are cleansed, according to the institution of the law, by the offering and sprinkling of typical blood: And, even by the tenor of the Sinai-covenant, there is no such thing as forgiveness of sin to be obtained without the bloodshed of atoning sacrifices; which evidently typified, and strongly pointed to the blood of Jesus Christ for effectually cleansing us from all sin; (1 John i. 7.) and intimate that there can be no real purgation from sin without his blood.

23 It therefore plainly appears from what has been said, that, by the appointment and commandment of God, it was necessary that, not only the book of the covenant, and the people; but also that the tabernacle and all its utensils, which were figurative representations of heaven, and of the blessings pertaining to it, according to the model or delineations, (*υποτύπων*) that were shewn to Moses in the mount, (see the note on chap. viii. 5.) should be cleansed and set apart for sacred use by the typical sacrifices and various sprinklings but now mentioned; insomuch that the high priest was never to enter into the holy of holies without the blood of those sacrifices. But as the heavenly things themselves are incomparably more excellent than those patterns of them; so it was necessary, according to the infinite wisdom, holiness, and sovereign will and appointment of God, answerable to these figurative representations, that the heavenly sanctuary itself, and every thing relative to it, should be consecrated to holy use for sinful creatures †, by a proportionably more noble, excellent, and worthy sacrifice, than all that were offered under the law, that, in virtue of this great sacrifice, not only the new covenant between God and his people might be confirmed

NOTES.

* Every thing that might abide the fire was indeed to pass through that for cleansing, and to be purified with the water of separation, *Numb. xxxi. 23.*; and both the clothes and bodies of those who led away the scape-goat, and who burnt the sin-offerings, were to be washed with water; and so was the flesh of those who had touched such things as were ceremonially unclean. (*Lev. xvi. 26,—28. and xxii. 6.*) But as there was no moral defilement in any of those things; so the apostle, not reckoning them to his purpose, passes them over,

and says, with a tacit exception of such like things, that almost all things were by the law purged with blood.

† Better sacrifices is here put, by an analogy of number, for a better sacrifice, in an antithesis to the legal sacrifices; because this is more eminent in its virtue than, and includes the signification of, all those sacrifices: For it is only the one sacrifice of Christ that is intended, as appears from the following verses, where the apostle speaks of it, as but once offered, and as completely sufficient alone, and of itself, to answer its end.

confirmed, and they cleansed from all iniquity; but that Jesus, their High Priest himself, might also be fully consecrated to his office, (*John xvii. 19.*) and enter into heaven itself to present his blood before the throne of God; (*ver. 12.*) and might prepare that holy habitation for their use and enjoyment, who in due season were to follow him thither. (*John xiv. 2, 3.*)

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

24 For Christ, the anointed High Priest of the church, has not entered, like the high priest of old, into such earthly places, as were framed by the hands of men, and were no more than mere figures and resemblances of the *heavenly sanctuary, and true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man*, (*chap. viii. 2.*) and the model of which was given to *Moses* on the mount; (*chap. viii. 5.*)* but he is ascended in his human nature with the blood of his sacrifice into heaven itself, even the heaven of heavens, now in, and by means of that nature, and in that holiest of all, to fulfil the remainder of his priestly office, by appearing in the immediate presence of God's glory, as our representative, to present before him, as on a throne of grace, the merit of his blood in his ever living to make intercession for us, who come unto God by him. (*Chap. vii. 25.*)

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others:

25 Not that we are to imagine as if, in order to his entering into this heavenly sanctuary, and presenting his atoning blood there, it was necessary for him to offer himself a sacrifice, as he did on the cross in suffering unto death, more than once, which alone was completely satisfactory to divine justice; or that he should frequently repeat it, as, according to the *Jewish* institution, the high priest offered sacrifices, because of their imperfection, every year, in order to his entering into the worldly sanctuary, not with his own blood, but with the blood of other creatures, mere animals, that could never take away our sins, which rendered us unworthy and unmeet to be admitted into God's immediate presence in heaven.

26 For

N O T E.

* *Holy places*, in the plural number, seem to me to signify the entire building of the tabernacle, inclusive of the court of the priests, and of the holy of holies, into which the high priest passed through the veil: And Christ's entering, in opposition thereunto, into heaven itself, may intimate that, through the offering of himself, he ministers in his human nature, prefigured by the tabernacle, and in heaven, prefigured by the sanctuary, according to what has been observed about the distinction between the sanctuary

and tabernacle: (see the note on *chap. viii. 2.*) And though the word (*ἁγία*) rendered *the figures*, is most commonly understood to signify that which answers the type; yet it here evidently means the same thing with *the patterns* mentioned in the preceding verse, which represented the things signified by them, answerable to the perfect platform that was given of them to *Moses* in the mount. (See the paraphrase and note on *chap. viii. 5.* and *Dr. Owen* on this verse.)

B b b

26 (For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world;) but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

26 For if there had been a necessity of a repetition of his offering, as there was of those under the law, because of their imperfection; then he must have shed his blood for making atonement very often from the time that sin entered into the world*, which was soon after the foundation of the earth was laid; since, otherwise, there could have been no expiation by his blood for the sins of those that lived in former ages: But such is the infinite virtue, perfection, and dignity of the excellent sacrifice which Christ has offered, and such is the extent of its efficacy backwards and forward, to all former as well as future generations, that now, at the close of the *Jewish* dispensation, to put an end to *that*, and at the introduction of the gospel-dispensation to establish *this*, which is the last and best of all that ever will be set up in our world; (see the note on chap. i. 2. and Mr. Joseph Mede's apostacy, &c. chapters xi. and xii.) he at this time, once for all, (*μερῶς*) has been manifested in the flesh to expiate the guilt, and (*eis ademptionem*) abolish the power of sin, with all its dreadful effects, by his meritorious sufferings unto death, when he offered a sacrifice, not of bulls and goats, but of himself, whose entire human nature, soul as well as body, and *that* dignified by the personally united Godhead, was the offering he made for sin; and so was of such infinite value, as not to need a repetition of it, or any other propitiatory sacrifice besides it.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

27 And in as much as, by the settled law and righteous appointment of God, upon the entrance of sin, for the punishment of it, all mankind, in the ordinary course of things†, must die once, and but once out of this mortal state, never to return to it more; and, after that, must appear at the awful bar of a future judgment, to be dealt with according to the demerit of their deeds done in the body; unless they be relieved by grace:

28 So

NOTES.

* As there was no need of any expiatory sacrifice, till sin invaded human nature; so *since the foundation of the world* in this place must be understood to mean, not absolutely from the creation of the world, but from the fall of Adam, which was quickly after it; and thus this phrase is to be understood, Luke xi. 50.

† Though all men in general must die, and come to judgment, according to the penal sentence; yet as there was an exemption from dying, by the special favour of God on Christ's account, in the

case of Enoch and Elias; so there will be of those that shall be alive on earth at Christ's second coming: (1 Thess. iv. 17.) And though in the common course believers must die, and all of them must appear in judgment, as well as others; yet the *sting* of death, and the *rigour* of proceeding against them, and the *condemning sentence* that shall be passed upon others, will be taken off from them, through the merit of Christ, who will appear, as the Judge of all, to their salvation.

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.

28 So Christ, to take off *the curse* of the law-sentence for sin, died once, and but once *, and thereby offered only one sacrifice to bear the guilt and punishment of the sins of his people, who may well be called *many*, as they are an innumerable multitude, even all that believe in him. And unto them, who with faith, hope, desire, and love, expect his coming again to judgment, and patiently wait for it, looking for salvation alone by him, he will personally appear at what may be called, by way of eminence, the *second time*, not as he did before, in a state of humiliation and suffering for their sins; but in all his majesty and glory, as no longer bearing their iniquities, but coming to give them a complete enjoyment of all the happiness of the heavenly world, to which he will adjudge them, soul and body, at the last day, as the fruit and effect of what by his death he has obtained for them.

RECollections.

How gradually has God made known his mind and will about the great things that relate to Christ, and salvation by him! These were obscurely hinted in typical representations, by the earthly tabernacle and its various utensils, and services; but are brought to clear light by gospel-revelation, that we may behold in Christ far more transcendent glories than ever appeared in those shadows, which were to be fulfilled in him. May we be led to this grand antitype for all the light and grace, pardon of sin, communion with God, and spiritual food for our souls, that were typified by those legal institutions, which could make nothing perfect, as pertaining to the conscience!—What a consummate and glorious High Priest is Christ! All of that character under the law were only figures of him; but he, as our gospel High Priest, ministers in the most excellent tabernacle of his own human nature, and in heaven itself; and has entered, once for all, into that most holy place, there to abide for ever, in virtue of his own blood, by which he obtained eternal redemption for us. With what satisfaction may we depend upon the efficacy of his blood, without which there is no remission! If sprinkling the blood of animals, and the ashes of an heifer, availed for ceremonial purifications of the body; how much more must the precious blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, as an immaculate and divinely dignified lamb, purge our souls from the guilt, defilement, and power of sin, in its application to them? O blessed time of reformation! The gospel-covenant relating hereunto is sure and certain: Whether we consider it as the covenant of God the Father with his people in Christ, or as Christ's testamentary bequest, all its promises are ratified past repeal; and all its blessings, unto the remission of sin, and the inheritance of eternal life, may be claimed; and shall be enjoyed by them, that are effectually called in every age. But how necessary is our Lord's intercessory presentation of his sacrifice in heaven, and application of it to our souls on earth, to render it efficacious to our own salvation!—All mankind in the general course of things must, by divine appointment,

B b b 2

NOTE.

* Christ's being once offered to bear the sins of many, evidently answers to its being appointed unto men once to die; (ver. 27.) and shews that the offering of his propitiatory sacrifice was, strictly speaking, on the cross, and not in heaven; and shews that this *one offering*, (which, in opposition to his suffering often, ver. 26. is called his appearing

once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself) is intended all along in the foregoing context; it being inconsistent with his state in heaven to continue under sufferings; and the presentation of the blood of his sacrifice there, being an ever-continuing exhibition of the same, cannot be properly said to be but once.

ment, unavoidably die, and come to judgment; but, blessed be God, that every true believer has a happy relief against the terror of these thoughts: For to them who look, and wait in a suitable manner, for Christ's second coming, he will appear in all his glory to adjudge them to, and give them possession of, all possible happiness, in soul and body for ever, on account of the one offering he has made of himself for them.

C H A P. X.

The apostle shews up his main argument relating to the insufficiency of all legal sacrifices for taking away sin, 1,—4. And to the necessity and efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ for that purpose, according to the tenor of the new covenant, which contains the substantial blessings that the law was only the shadow of, 5,—18. And, having finished the doctrinal, he enters on the practical part of the epistle, by way of inference from the preceding discourse, from which he draws an argument for holy boldness in the believer's access to God through Jesus Christ, 19,—22. And for steadfastness in the faith, and excitations to mutual love and duty, and to frequent assemblings together for religious worship, 23,—25. And then he warns them of the danger of apostacy, 26,—31. Reminds them of their former illumination, and sufferings with patience and spiritual joy, 32,—34. And encourages them to maintain their holy profession to the end of their days, 35,—39.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

FOR the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.

Yea, it was so far from containing the substance of those eminently good things themselves, that it was rather like the imperfect representation, which the mere shadow of a man's body makes of him, than like his image in a looking-glass, which gives a more distinct view of him. (See the note on 2 Cor. iii. 18.) And therefore the law, with all those figurative sacrifices, which, because of their imperfection, the high priest offered repeatedly every year, on the great day of atonement, can never be effectual to discharge them from the guilt of sin, and bring them into a state of reconciliation and acceptance with God, that are concerned in, and attend upon those ceremonial services, and approach the divine majesty by those sacrifices; nor can they ever make them perfect, as per-

IT evidently appears then from all that hath been insisted on in the foregoing discourse, that the *Mosaic law*, with all its institutions of the Levitical priesthood, and sacrifices, whose blood was carried into the holy of holies, was only a typical representation of Christ and his sacrifice offered on earth, and of his entering with his own blood into heaven, to present the merit of it there, as the purchase of all the substantial privileges and blessings, which were then future, and to be introduced under the gospel state: Yea, it was so far from containing the substance of those eminently good things themselves, that it was rather like the imperfect representation, which the mere shadow of a man's body makes of him, than like his image in a looking-glass, which gives a more distinct view of him. (See the note on 2 Cor. iii. 18.) And therefore the law, with all those figurative sacrifices, which, because of their imperfection, the high priest offered repeatedly every year, on the great day of atonement, can never be effectual to discharge them from the guilt of sin, and bring them into a state of reconciliation and acceptance with God, that are concerned in, and attend upon those ceremonial services, and approach the divine majesty by those sacrifices; nor can they ever make them perfect, as per-

taining

taining to the conscience. (*Chap. ix. 9. see the note there.*)

1 For then would they not have ceased to be offered; because that the worshippers once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins.

2 For had these ends been perfectly obtained by those sacrifices, Is it not plain that God would never have appointed, and that there would have been no occasion for frequent, or indeed for any repetition of them, after they were first offered? They then would certainly have ceased to be offered any more; because, on supposition that the worshippers, to whom those sacrifices related, were really and completely cleansed thereby at once from their guilt, and had obtained acceptance with God to eternal life, they would have had no perplexing and distressing self-condemnations in their consciences, as if, for want of a further atonement, they were still in an unpardoned state, or needed some other sacrifice to purify and discharge them from the guilt of their sins before God; which if it were once perfectly done, would have been done for ever.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

3 But this was so far from being their case, that in the very offering of those legal sacrifices at returning seasons, there was every year, on the great day of atonement, a solemn *public confession*, made by the high priest, of all the sins of *Israel*, and they were to *afflict their souls* for them, (*Lev. xvi. 21, 22, 29, 31.*) which brought their sins to a painful remembrance, and plainly shows that their former sacrifices had not perfectly atoned for them, as indeed in the nature of things they could not.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

4 For there is such an infinite disproportion between those little worthless sacrifices, and the demerit of sin, and the high demands of God's law and justice to make satisfaction for it, and to demonstrate his absolute detestation of it, as committed against his infinite majesty, crown, and dignity, that it is really impossible for the blood of such mean animals, as bulls and goats, to have virtue enough in themselves, or to be deemed, according to any rules of wisdom or justice, a sufficient offering to make a true, proper, and effectual atonement for sin; they could only be designed of God to prefigure that all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, which alone has worth and efficacy in itself, to answer this great end.

5 Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

5 Since therefore, there was such an absolute defect in those legal sacrifices to answer this important purpose; When our blessed Lord spake with a reference to his coming into this lower world, (*Pf. xl. 6, 7, 8.*) and when he actually came into his incarnate state for executing his priestly office, he said to God his Father, Thou wouldst not accept of legal sacrifices and offerings of any kind, as a proper expiation for sin; they being of too little value to satisfy thy law and justice

justice for it. But, that an offering equal to the offence might be made to thee, Thou, in thy infinite wisdom and good pleasure, and in mercy to thy church, hast, by an extraordinary operation of the Holy Ghost, prepared a true human body *, animated with a human soul, and so formed a proper human nature for me, that I thy eternal Son, might personally unite it to myself, and thereby dignify it with infinite worth to render it available for a complete atonement.

6 In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure:

6 Thou couldst not approve of, or acquiesce, or take pleasure in any of the sacrifices under the law; no, not of the most eminent of them, such as burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin: Thou neither didst intend or desire any of these, nor take the least complacency and rest in them, as if they were answerable to the demands of thy law and justice, or worthy of thy wisdom and holiness to accept, or were in themselves of sufficient virtue to take away sin.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.

7 When this was the state of the case, then, according to what is recorded concerning me at the head of the roll of eternity †, and of scripture prophecy, relating to the sacrifice that thou wouldst accept, I presented myself to thee, as ready to do what all those sacrifices

N O T E S.

* The words in the *Hebrew* of *Psal.* xl. 6. from whence this passage is quoted, are, *Mine ear hast thou bored.* Various have been the conjectures of the learned to reconcile the difference between these words and the apostle's expression, *A body hast thou prepared me*, which agrees with the translation that *the Seventy* have given of them. But what, upon the whole, appears to me to be the most natural and easy way of accounting for this difference, is, that our author designed to give *the sense* of this clause, as he also does of some following passages, rather than to *recite the words of the Seventy*; it being questionable whether that translation has not been altered in some places from the New Testament, and it being unlikely that the apostle should ever quote it, especially to the *Hebrews*, and where it is wrong. (See *Dr. Owen* on the place.) Accordingly some think that there is an allusion to the boring of a servant's ear through with an awl, who was to serve his master for ever. (*Exod.* xxi. 5, 6.) But others, observing that the *Hebrew* word there used is different from that in *Psal.* xl. 6. understand it of God's fitting Christ with a body, of which *the ear* is, by a synecdoche, put for the *whole*, because it is by the ear that men hear and listen to

him, whom they are to obey; in allusion to which Christ says, *The Lord God has opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious.* &c. (*Isa.* l. 5.) And, by a like synecdoche, *the ear* may be put for the *whole* of Christ's human nature, soul and body, which he came to offer as a sacrifice for sin, and is called his offering himself. (See *Isa.* liii. 10. *Mark* xiv. 34. *Eph.* v. 2. and *Heb.* ix. 14.)

† *The volume of the book* has been greatly criticised upon by the learned; and as the books of the ancients were commonly rolls of parchment, from whence they were called *volumes*, some have thought that the *volume of the roll* is a tautology without sense: But as the word (*χιρᾶλις*) rendered a *volume*, signifies also the *head*, it might be, perhaps, better rendered *the head of the book*; and so may refer either to the first and principal article in the roll of eternity, or *book of life*, which contained Christ's engagement to the Father; or to the first promise of the seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, which stands at the head or beginning of the first volume or book of scripture, *Gen.* iii. 15; or may refer to the former part of the *Old Testament*, which speaks of sacrifices in their typical reference to the sacrifice of Christ.

sacrifices could not; saying, Behold, I cheerfully come into a state of incarnation at thy call, to fulfil thy purposes of grace, and my covenant engagements to thee, and all the promises and prophecies concerning me; and to perform the good pleasure of thy will in doing thy work, and particularly in suffering unto death whatsoever thou, O God my Father, requirest for the honour of thy law and justice, and for making a proper and complete satisfaction for sin.

9 Above, when he said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offerings, and offering, for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein, (which are offered by the law;)

8 When in the above-cited place our Lord said, Thou wouldst not accept of any kind of sacrifice and offering; no, not of any burnt offering and offering for sin, as an effectual atonement; nor hadst thou the least complacency of rest in that consideration of any of them which are offered, according to thine appointment in the *Mosaic* law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

9 Then, in reflection upon the utter insufficiency of those sacrifices, he said, Behold, O God of righteousness and salvation, here am I; Take the satisfaction, thy justice demands from me; I freely come to put myself in the sinner's stead, to bear his curse, and to answer the utmost of thy requirements, according to what thou thyself has appointed, and dost approve of and delight in, to open a way for the remission of sin. Now, by our Lord's saying this, he manifestly shows that the former appointment or declaration of God's will, with regard to the first covenant, and all its offerings, were to be no longer in force, that he might confirm and give effect to this last-mentioned will, with respect to the new-covenant, and the sacrifice which he himself came to offer for giving it an everlasting establishment.

10 By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

10 By which will of God, as fulfilled by Christ, (*ver. 9.*) we, who believe in him, are not in a typical and ceremonial way, as *Israel* were by the sacrifices under the law, but really and effectually purged from the guilt and defilement of our sins; and are dedicated to God, and purified as a peculiar people for his service, through the merit and virtue of the sacrificial offering of Christ's human nature, (see the note on *ver. 5.*) of which the body is the visible part, answering to the bodies of the beasts that were slain: Which offering he made, not with any repetition of it, like those under the law, but only once, and *that* for ever; it being in itself absolutely perfect, and available for making a complete atonement at once. (See the note on *chap. ix. 28.*) And herein lies an eminent and remarkable difference between all the former priests and their sacrifices, and Jesus, our great High Priest and his sacrifice.

11 Every

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering* he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

11 Every legal priest, in token of humble reverence, as well as of readiness to engage in the service of God*, *stands* before him, frequently officiating in his ministrations, and offering the same sort of animal sacrifices according to his station; none of which repeated sacrifices, whether daily or annual, can ever make a proper expiation to the satisfaction of divine justice for *any*; much less for *all manner* of sins.

12 But so incomparably superior is the dignity of Christ's person and sacrifice, above them and theirs, that this † gospel High Priest, after he had once offered himself, as the one only atoning sacrifice for all the sins of his people, immediately, upon his finishing that part of his office, rose from the dead to immortal honour, that he might live, and exercise his office, in an endless state of the highest dignity, rest, and authority, which may be figuratively represented by his eternally *sitting down* with majesty, glory, and acceptance, at God the Father's right hand; (see the note on *Act. vii. 55.*)

13 From that time forward exercising all power in heaven and earth, till, according to the promise of his Father, (*Psal. cx. 1.*) and his own just expectation on that foot, and on account of his meritorious performances, sin, Satan, the world and death; yea, all the adversaries to his person and authority, people and cause, shall be actually and universally subdued, like such vanquished, despicable enemies, as are trampled under the feet of the conqueror, in token of their utter destruction, and of his absolute dominion and triumph over them. (See the paraphrase on *Rom. xvi. 20.*)

14 For by that one offering, which he made of himself on the cross, he has obtained perfect deliverance from guilt and condemnation, and a perfect fitness for the worship and enjoyment of God, in the nearest relation and access to him, and in the most perfect state of the church, for all those who in a sacrificial sense are dedicated to God, and purged from their

NOTES.

* Every priest stands daily ministering seems in this place to denote the posture of humble service and reverence, with which the priests performed their ministrations; in opposition to which Christ is represented, in the present execution of his office, as *sitting down* with grandeur and authority on the right hand of God. (ver. 12.) And as the word *daily* (καθ' ἡμέραν) is used with reference to the high priest's offering up sacrifices once a year, (chap. vii. 27. see the note there) we may very well understand it

here as relating to his offering on that day, though not to the exclusion of the ministrations of the ordinary priests every day; and so all legal sacrifices, whether daily or annual, are represented as utterly insufficient to take away sin.

† As *man* is not in the original, and *priest* is the nearest antecedent, ver. 11. I should think the pronoun (αὐτός) might better be rendered *this priest*, or *this high priest*, according as we understand the word *priest* in the foregoing verse to signify, rather than *this man*.

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them:

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

their sins, through faith in him; and *that* not for a time only, but for perpetuity, without any change of their privileges and church-state on earth, or of their consummate happiness to all eternity in heaven.

15, 16 And the Holy Ghost himself, as a divine person, has given us, in the inspired writings of the Old Testament, a sweet intimation of this important truth*, in the representation he hath therein made of the new covenant, which Christ has now established, and all the blessings of which he has now actually purchased by his death. For after he formerly had said in a prediction of gospel-times, (*Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.*) This is the tenor of the covenant of mere grace, that I will make with my people, when the days of the present dispensation shall expire, says the great Jehovah, Instead of writing my law of the ten commandments on tables of stone, as I did at mount *Sinai*; I, by a special inward operation of my Spirit, (see the note and paraphrase on *chap. viii. 10.*) will effectually inscribe the doctrines of divine revelation in the fleshy tables of their hearts and minds: (*2 Cor. iii. 3.*)

17 And then, to assure them that nothing shall defeat the performance of his new covenant to them, he adds, in a way of absolute promise, with all the grace and authority of the God, who only can forgive sins, I will so perfectly pardon all their swerings from, and transgressions of my law, as never to break my covenant, on account thereof, or call them to remembrance any more, as though they were not perfectly expiated, as I did the sins of *Israel* in the annual repetition of their insufficient sacrifices; (*ver. 3.*) nor will I ever upbraid them with them, or produce them in judgment against them. (See the paraphrase on *chap. viii. 12.*)

18 Now it is undeniable that, when there is such a complete and everlasting forgiveness of all trespasses, according to the gracious tenor of this covenant, as recorded by the Holy Ghost himself, there can be no use or need of any farther atoning sacrifice for sin, nor of Christ's repeating the sacrifice of himself; because *that*, which he has already offered, hath been effectual

N O T E.

* In this and the three following verses the apostle winds up his argument concerning the excellency and perfection of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ; and as he had laid the foundation of his last set of arguments for it, *chap. viii. 10, 13.* in a quotation of the account that is given of the *new covenant*, *Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.*; so he here issues the whole

in a reference to the description there given of the covenant, as now completely ratified, and all the blessings of it purchased, and secured to the church, by the one only offering of Christ, which renders all other expiatory sacrifices, and any repetition of his own, entirely needless.

effectual to procure this important blessing of the covenant, of which he is the Mediator, (*chap. ix. 15.*) which he has now fully confirmed, and all the blessings of which he has purchased, once for all, by his precious blood.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

19 Since therefore, my dear brethren in the Lord, * we, who cordially believe in Christ, have such solid grounds of free liberty, and so rich encouragement, as may be gathered from the preceding discourse, for holy freedom and confidence in our approaches to God, as our reconciled God and Father, and so of entering by faith into the holiest of all, even heaven itself; and are admitted to it, through the merit, and application to our consciences, of the most inestimably precious blood of Jesus, our great High Priest and Sacrifice, who himself is gone thither in virtue of his own blood, to present and plead it there for us, that we might not be kept at a distance, as the people of *Israel* were from the holy of holies under the law; but might follow after him in the daily actings of our faith, till we shall have a personal entrance into the immediate presence of his glory;

20 By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh;

20 Since, I say, we have this liberty of access to God, through the blood of Christ, in gospel-worship, by the way of the new covenant; a way, which is now opened and declared with the greatest evidence to us, and is of such perpetual use and advantage, as to be always *new*, so as never to wax old or decay; and may well be called a *living* way, as the once dead, but now living Redeemer has opened it for us, and as it is the way, in which we find quickening virtue unto spiritual life here, and are led on to eternal life hereafter; and which he, who is *the way, the truth, and the life*, (*John xiv. 6.*) has prepared, dedicated, and established, (*everlasting*) as sacred to our use, that we might not be excluded from the true holy of holies; but might follow our High Priest into heaven itself, by means of his crucified body, which procured this open way for us, when the *vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom*, and closed no more; which signified, among other things, that every obstruction to our entrance into heaven itself is now removed, by the death and sacrifice

N O T E.

* The apostle having finished the *doctrinal* part of his epistle, relating to the superior excellence of the person, priesthood, and sacrifice of Christ, proceeds in this and the following verses to the end

of the epistle, to a *practical* improvement of the whole, which he here introduces by way of inference from the foregoing discourse, from which he here draws his argument for it.

sacrifice of Christ; (see the paraphrase on *Matth.* xxvii. 51.)

21 And *having*
an high priest o-
ver the house of
God;

21 And since we now have a great and glorious High Priest, every way surpassing all that went before him in his person, office, and exaltation; a priest of infinite dignity and authority, who is the head of the church-militant on earth, and triumphant in heaven; and who, as its Lord and proprietor, presides over it and all its concerns, as his own house, (*chap.* iii. 6.) in which God dwells after a more excellent manner than he ever did in the *Jewish* tabernacle;

22 Let us draw
near with a true
heart, in full as-
surance of faith,
having our hearts
sprinkled from an
evil conscience, and
our bodies washed
with pure water.

22 Let us, upon these encouraging considerations, be emboldened to make our humble approaches to God, as our reconciled God and Father, through Jesus Christ, and as seated on a throne of grace, that, by the assistance of his Spirit, we may draw near to him in prayer, and in all other acts of religious worship, in the exercise of every grace; in sweet and holy communion with him, and conformity to him; with integrity and uprightness, and a heart established in the truth of the gospel; and with the liveliest exercise of faith, even to a full assurance of the perfection of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice, and of our own acceptance in coming to God through him, as persons whose souls, in all their powers and faculties, are cleansed from the stupidity and treachery of an unfaithful, and from the disquietude and defilement of a guilty, terrifying, and condemning conscience, by an application of the blood of Jesus, in opposition to the sprinklings of the blood of the legal sacrifices*; and as persons who are truly sanctified to God and his service, by the renewing and purifying work of the Holy Spirit, (in opposition to the ceremonial cleansing of the bodies of those, who drew nigh to God under the law, by their being washed with clean water) that the outward conversation, as well as the inward principles and dispositions of the heart, may be pure.

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23 Corref-

N O T E.

* As *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*, evidently alludes to ceremonial rites in various sprinklings of the blood of the sacrifices under the law; so *having our bodies washed with pure water*, as it here stands in connection with those sprinklings, seems to allude to *divers washings*, *chap.* ix. 10. among which were the priest's washing his flesh in water, and having the water of purification sprinkled upon him, before he went into the presence of the Lord. *Lev.* xvi. 4. and *Numb.* viii. 7.—But if we suppose,

with some expositors, that here is a reference to the New Testament-ordinance of *baptism*; the mode of administering it may be signified by the *sprinkling of the conscience*, as well as by *washing the body*; and the cleansing virtue of the blood and sacrifice of Christ, or of the Spirit in his applying the blood of Christ to the soul, which is signified by baptism, is expressed by God's *sprinkling clean water upon us, that we may be clean.* *Ez.* xxxvi. 25.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: (for he is faithful that promised.)

24 And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 And to subserve our steadfastness and perseverance in the faith, and in our holy profession of it, Let it be our joint concern seriously to consider our respective wants and infirmities, temptations and dangers, on one hand; and the grounds of hope and encouragement, that are in Christ, and in the promises, on the other, that we may use all proper means, by example, exhortations, and cautions, to stir up one another, with fervency and faithfulness, to the love of God, and Christ, and the truths of the gospel; and to an affectionate union and communion one with another; and so may love as brethren, and excite each other to every evangelical and moral duty, and to every thing that is truly excellent and worthy our Christian character.

27 And as ever we would be steadfast in the profession of our faith, and in love and good works, Let us take special heed that we do not grow cool or indifferent, remiss or careless, on any pretence whatsoever, with regard to our stated and occasional meetings together, as we have opportunity, for the celebration of all divine ordinances; and, at length, desert church-assemblies, and cast off public worship, and the communion of saints, and the solemn profession of Christ's name; and so put ourselves out of the way of his promise and blessing for our preservation and growth in grace, comfort, and holiness, as is too much the custom of some that have given up their names to Christ, but are visibly backsliding from him; and as is the lamentable case of others that have notoriously and shamefully apostatized from all their former profession of him: But, instead of being influenced by their sinful and pernicious example, or treading in their dangerous steps, Let us admonish, excite, and encourage each other, to frequent

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23 Correspondent hereunto, Let us maintain our solemn profession, and open confession of Christ, and of our faith and hope in him, and in the promises of the new covenant, which he has ratified, and the blessings of which he has purchased by his blood; Let us persist steadfastly and invariably in our adherence to him, and in the belief and practice of every gospel-doctrine and duty; without any distrust or hesitancy, or perturbation of mind, through fear of tribulations for his sake, or of a disappointment of our hope in him: For he, who hath promised to *put his laws into his people's hearts, and to write them in their minds,* (ver. 16.) is unchangeable in his truth and faithfulness, and may be fully depended upon, for all seasonable supplies of promised grace to enable us to hold on, and hold out to the end; and for a performance of all his promises, unto complete salvation.

24 And to subserve our steadfastness and perseverance in the faith, and in our holy profession of it, Let it be our joint concern seriously to consider our respective wants and infirmities, temptations and dangers, on one hand; and the grounds of hope and encouragement, that are in Christ, and in the promises, on the other, that we may use all proper means, by example, exhortations, and cautions, to stir up one another, with fervency and faithfulness, to the love of God, and Christ, and the truths of the gospel; and to an affectionate union and communion one with another; and so may love as brethren, and excite each other to every evangelical and moral duty, and to every thing that is truly excellent and worthy our Christian character.

25 And as ever we would be steadfast in the profession of our faith, and in love and good works, Let us take special heed that we do not grow cool or indifferent, remiss or careless, on any pretence whatsoever, with regard to our stated and occasional meetings together, as we have opportunity, for the celebration of all divine ordinances; and, at length, desert church-assemblies, and cast off public worship, and the communion of saints, and the solemn profession of Christ's name; and so put ourselves out of the way of his promise and blessing for our preservation and growth in grace, comfort, and holiness, as is too much the custom of some that have given up their names to Christ, but are visibly backsliding from him; and as is the lamentable case of others that have notoriously and shamefully apostatized from all their former profession of him: But, instead of being influenced by their sinful and pernicious example, or treading in their dangerous steps, Let us admonish, excite, and encourage each other, to frequent

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our religious assemblies on all occasions, and to go on with chearfulness and constancy in the good ways of the Lord. And ye ought to be the more diligent and earnest herein, that ye may be the better prepared against the awful time that is coming on, in proportion to the plain signs, which ye may now easily observe, that the utter destruction of *Jerusalem* and the *Jewish* nation, for their obstinate infidelity, hastens apace, and is very near at hand; and against the day of death and judgment, which ye cannot but know will soon overtake you, whether ye fall in the approaching calamity or not, and which will be an inexpressibly dreadful day to apostates.

26 For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

26 For if any of us, who make a profession of Christ's name, be so much under the power of unbelief, prejudice, pride, and a worldly temper, as, not merely through inadvertency, or some sudden hurry of spirit, temptation, and fear of danger;* but deliberately, resolutely, and willingly, with full consent, to reject the doctrines of the gospel, and the good ways of the Lord, and to turn back to judaism, or to all irreligion, and go on in a course of sin against God, after we have been enlightened in, and convinced of the truth of the gospel, with respect to the way of salvation alone by Jesus Christ; the case of such apostates is of all others the most dreadful: For as all legal sacrifices are of no farther use in the worship of God, nor ever were available to purge from the moral guilt of sin; and as there never was any sacrifice appointed under the law for presumptuous sinners; so there remains no other, than the one only sacrifice of Christ, for the remission of sins; and they that reject this last and only remedy, by perfidious unbelief, can have no interest in it; nor can there be any hope of pardon and acceptance with God on any other ground whatsoever.

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

27 But all that remains to them, as their deplorable portion, is nothing less, than a sort of terrible foreboding in their consciences of the righteous judgment of God, which will certainly overtake them, an awful emblem of which will soon be given in the destruction of *Jerusalem*; and they must look for the incensed wrath of God to fall upon them, which will burn in

N O T E.

* *The sin* here intended, as appears from all the preceding and following context, is *wilful, resolute, contemptuous, and utter apostacy* from the profession of Christ and his gospel: And therefore, though we ought to be always upon the strictest guard against every known sin, and to be deeply humbled before

God, whenever we fall into it; yet this text is not to be understood of every sin that has been committed under the power of temptation, against light and conviction, as some tender spirited Christians are often apt to apply it, to their own great discouragement and terror, almost to utter despair.

23 He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, where-with he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

in the most tremendous manner, like the hottest fire, to consume all such enemies as set themselves against the blessed and only Saviour. (See 2 *Thes.* i. 7, 8, 9.)

28 And this, the wretched apostates I am speaking of, may be assured will be their horrible end, with the highest aggravations of guilt and misery, if they only consider how severely God dealt with refractory transgressors of, and revoltors from the *Mosaic* law, according to the tenor of which, Whosoever contemned and presumptuously transgressed the law given by *Moses*, with regard to capital cases, for which no sacrifice was appointed, he was, by the order of God himself, (*Num.* xv. 30, 31. and *Deut.* xvii. 6. and xix. 11,—13.) to be put to death, without the least pity to spare him, or to mitigate his punishment, whenever he was convicted by the testimony of two or three credible witnesses, that could prove the fact upon him. So jealous was God for the authority and honour of that dispensation.

29 How much greater, and inexpressibly more dreadful then, must ye certainly conclude, in your own consciences, from the very nature and reason of things, will that punishment be, even unto eternal death, which is justly due to, and shall be inflicted upon an apostate from the Lord Jesus Christ, and a resolute sinner against all the light and grace of the gospel, and against his own conviction of its truth, who has offered the highest indignity to the eternal Son of God himself, in trampling upon his divine person and authority, meditation and gospel, with the vilest insolence and contempt, as though he were an impostor; and who, instead of trusting, for pardon and justification, in that precious blood, by which the covenant of grace in its purest administration was ratified, and all its blessings procured*, and by which the incarnate Son of God himself

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N O T E.

* *The blood of the covenant, where-with he was sanctified*, seems to relate to *Christ*, who was consecrated to his priestly office by his own blood, rather than to him who counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing: For the Son of God is the immediate antecedent, and the apostle's design was to aggravate the sin of apostates, from a consideration of the worth and dignity of the object they slighted and abused; and as the Father is said to have sanctified *Christ*, or set him apart to his mediatorial office, and *Christ* spake of his having sanctified or dedicated and set apart himself to it by his death, *John* x. 36. and xvii. 19.; so he was sanctified to his priestly office in heaven, by the blood of the new covenant,

answerable to the sanctification or dedication of *Aaron* and his sons to the high priesthood for the service of the sanctuary, by the blood of the *Mosaic* covenant, *Lev.* viii. 30.; and the scheme of this epistle for comparing *Christ* and the high priest under the law, naturally leads us to this sense.—But if any would refer it to the person, that was guilty of the sin here spoken of, his being sanctified may be considered, as relating, not to a real internal sanctification, but to an external visible dedication to God in his baptism and entrance into church-communion, by which he made a solemn profession of being purged from his sins, and sanctified or set apart to the Lord.

was consecrated to his priestly office, for the complete execution of it, has prophaneily slighted, and injuriously treated that very blood, which he shed for the remission of sin, as though it were not so holy as the blood of bulls and goats; nor more sacred, or of any more value or efficacy, than the blood of a common man, or even than the blood of a malefactor, according to the account that the *Jews* made of him when they crucified him; and who, over and above all this, has spitefully, maliciously, and contemptuously opposed, affronted and vilified the person, operations, and grace, of the good Spirit, that is freely given of God for gracious purposes, and is the giver and applier of all grace, as though his wonderful attestations to Christ's character, as the true Messiah, by innumerable gifts and miraculous operations *, were delusions, or the effects of diabolical power. Such a malignant wretch blasphemes the Holy Ghost himself, and if they who only neglect the gospel-salvation, shall not escape the wrath of God, (*chap. ii. 3.*) how much less can such an apostate escape the most dreadful and eternal punishment? (*Mat. xii. 31.*)

30 For we know him that said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

30 For we know who it is that spoke after the following awful manner. (*Deut. xxxii. 35.*) It is my incontestable right, and absolute prerogative, to execute righteous wrath upon transgressors of every kind, according to their desert; this is an essential part of my supremacy and dominion over all, as the Judge of the whole world: And, as the vindication of my honour requires it, I will certainly, sooner or later, in my own time and way, inflict severe punishments on incorrigible offenders, in proportion to the malignity of their crimes. This was said by the great Jehovah himself, the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, whose justice and truth are uncontrollable, and whose power is irresistible. And a little afterwards, it is there added, (*Deut. xxxii. 36.*) The Lord will search and try his professing people; and will as surely condemn and destroy them, that perfidiously revolt from him, as he will approve of, and save them, that are stedfast in his covenant.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

31 How severe then must his judgment, and the executions of it, be upon all the apostates from Christ and the gospel? It is indeed dreadful to suffer the miseries that he can lay upon them, by only stirring up the

N O T E.

* The person here described seems to have come very near to, if not to have been guilty of, the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost himself, which our Lord speaks of, *Matth. xii. 31, 32.* (See the

note there.) Only there may be this difference, that the apostate had *received the knowledge of the truth*, (*ver. 16.*) which they, whom our Lord spoke of, never did.

the fury of mere creatures against them, though the weakness of the instrument abates the force of his hand in smiting with it: But it is inexpressibly tremendous, beyond all imagination, to fall as victims into the hands of his justice, without mixture of mercy, to be punished by the immediate and almighty arm of the great and terrible God himself; who, in opposition to all idols, is the only living and true God; and whose existence, power, and activity, abide invariably and for ever, to execute wrath, as an incensed, unappealed Judge, to the utmost extremity on the despisers of his Son and Spirit, (*ver. 29.*) as well as to complete the everlasting happiness of those that hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. (*ver. 23.*)

31 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions:

32 But, to excite sincere believers among you to watch and guard against the beginnings of apostacy, consider how it was with you, and reflect upon the solid satisfaction and hope ye formerly experienced, in the first days of your conversion, in which, as soon as ye were enlightened in the knowledge of the gospel, and of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, (*ver. 26.* and see the second note on *chap. vi. 4.*) ye were followed with severe persecutions from the Jewish zealots, and their confederates; which ye, like soldiers under the Captain of salvation, and like combatants in the agonistic exercises, were called to conflict with, in a glorious contention, on your part, for the sake of Christ, as with enemies, that set themselves, as it were, in battle array against him and you; and which ye patiently sustained with a noble Christian-courage and fortitude, through divine supports and assistances, without being daunted or dismayed at any of them, though they were of various kinds, and lay very heavy upon you:

33 Partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

33 While, on one hand, ye were maliciously accused and injuriously exposed to public disgrace, and made a spectacle to the world, like criminals brought forth into the theatre, (*συναγωγή*) and were ignominiously treated, as the *slaves of the world, and of scourging of all things*, (1 Cor. iv. 9, 13.) by cruel mockings, contempt, and scorn, and by the severest oppressions from the hands of wicked men, Jews and others, for righteousness sake; and while, on the other hand, ye tenderly sympathized with, and steadfastly adhered to, assisted, and bravely owned your fellow-Christians, and the apostles and servants of Christ, and mourned with them in their troubles, who were abused in the same oppressive and opprobrious manner, as though all had been done against yourselves.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds; and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

34 For as to myself in particular*, when I was in great tribulation, even unto bonds and imprisonment for the sake of Christ, ye were not ashamed to own and stand by me; but in Christian tenderness, love, and pity, ye sympathized with me, (*συμπάτητε*) grieved at my distress, prayed for me, relieved my wants, and supplied me with as comfortable accommodations, as our respective circumstances admitted of; And ye yourselves cheerfully submitted to the loss of the conveniences and necessities of this life, which were violently wrested out of your hands by furious persecutors; and ye even rejoiced to think of the glorious cause for which ye suffered, (*Act. v. 41.*) and of the rich advantage, that would accrue to your own souls thereby, as being well satisfied in your own minds, from the promises of God and your own happy experience of his grace, that ye have a better treasure in heaven, than any ye have lost or can lose upon earth; even a substantial treasure, which ye are entitled to, and is prepared by the free favour of God, and the purchase of Christ, who as your head and representative has taken possession of it for you; and which ye have the earnest of in your own souls, as what cannot be lost, or taken away from you, but abides with all safety for an everlasting inheritance at the end of all your troubles.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

35 Animated therefore by your faith in Christ, and in the promises, and by your holy fortitude in sufferings for him hitherto, take heed lest, through carnal fear, and the workings of unbelief, on account of the continuance of those, or the addition of any further tribulations, ye be now disheartened, to the relinquishing, or throwing off your holy boldness, freedom, and courage (*μαχηρίας*) in your profession of Christ's name, gospel, and cause, and in your joyful hopes of eternal life through him; which holy boldness herein is, at present, a noble support and satisfaction under all your trials, and shall have such a blessed and glorious reward in heaven, as, according to his gracious promise, (*ver. 36.*) is secured to you, and will abundantly more than make you a rich and eternal amends for all the troubles you endure in this momentary life for Christ's sake, though they be ever so great and many, like those which ye have already felt, and may yet further expect to meet with. (See *Rom. viii. 18.* and *2 Cor. iv. 16, 17.*)

36 For

N O T E.

* Here seems to be a reference to the apostle Paul's sufferings and bonds, which were notorious, and extremely great; and in which the Jewish belie-

vers tenderly sympathized with him, as appears from *Act. xx. 37, 38.* and *xxi. 4, 11, 12, 13.*

36 For ye have need of patience; that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

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36 For, according to the wise and holy appointment of God, the declarations of his word, and the disposals of his providence, that *patience may have its perfect work*, (Jam. i. 4.) such is your present state of afflictions and persecutions, that there is a necessity for you, and great need of abundance of grace to enable you to live in the continual exercise of a calm and quiet, humble and resigned submission to the sovereign will of God in them, to the end, that after ye have yielded yourselves up, through the whole course of your lives, to the commanding and disposing will of God, in patiently and willingly complying with the most difficult instances of it, ye might receive the promised blessing of eternal life, (1 John ii. 25.) which shall be graciously conferred upon you, in the salvation of your souls, (ver. 39.) at the end of your spiritual race and warfare, that will soon be finished, and exchanged for everlasting peace and joy.

37 For, according to an ancient prophetic vision, (Habak. ii. 3.) which may be applied, as relating to the Messiah and his salvation, in all his remarkable appearances, the time is exceeding short, as short as can be well expected, (*μικρον οσον οσον*) when the Messiah, who is coming, (*αγγελευμενος*) will certainly come, in his righteous judgment, for the confusion of his and your enemies, and in his tender mercy for your consolation and deliverance from all their oppressions, in the destruction of *Jerusalem*, which is just at hand, and is a lively emblem of his *last*, which may be emphatically called his *second* coming, (chap. ix. 28.) to the utter destruction of all impenitent and unbelieving sinners, and to your complete salvation, at the judgment of the great day; which, though it be not so near as the conflagration of *Jerusalem*; yet in God's account, with whom a thousand years are but as one day, (2 Pet. iii. 8.) and in comparison with the endless eternity that succeeds it, will be but a very little while hence; and then he who is to come, will actually come, without fail, to your unspeakable and everlasting joy: And though ye are apt to think the time long and tedious, while ye are groaning under present afflictions; yet ye may depend upon it, that he will not delay his coming to put you into possession of the promised recompence of reward; (ver. 35, 36.) no, not so much as one moment beyond the appointed time, which, as it is the best time, is fixed in the purpose of God, and is near at hand, to deliver you out of all your troubles; and as death at farthest will certainly rid you of them; so it cannot be long before he will receive you to himself.

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

38 And, (21) for your further encouragement, remember what follows in that prophecy; (*Habak. ii. 4.*) * The righteous man, who is *justified by faith*, and *whose heart is purified by faith*, (*Rom. v. 1.* and *Acts xv. 9.*) shall by means of his faith live a spiritual and holy life, in a state of acceptance with God, and communion with him, and in a humble patient waiting for, and expectation of this happy event all his days upon earth; and shall live in all blessedness and glory with Christ, according to the promise, (*ver. 36.*) for ever in heaven: But, in opposition to such, whoever he be that, after having made a profession of faith in Christ, shall apostatize from him †, through an unsubdued pride of spirit, and an evil heart of unbelief, which lift up themselves against him, and renounce the profession of his name, on account of the trials and sufferings it exposes him to, My soul, says God, speaking after the manner of men, shall be so far from taking any delight in him, whatsoever his pretences be, that I will have him in the utmost detestation, and will shew him no mercy; instead of my favours being towards him, my hottest indignation shall be incensed against him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe, to the saving of the soul.

39 But, as I have already told you, (*chap. vi. 9.*) that *I am persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation*; so we who are sincere in our profession of Christ, and are in truth before God what we appear to be before men, are not of the number of those hypocritical, treacherous, and false hearted nominal Christians, who revolt from him, and cast off their profession of him, to their own everlasting destruction: But we are of the number of those, who *believe with the heart unto righteousness, and confess with the mouth unto salvation*, (*Rom. x. 10.*) and shall stedfastly persevere therein to the end, as being *kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*; (*1 Pet. i. 5.*) and so, according to his promise, our faith stands in sure connection with, and shall certainly issue in the everlasting happiness of our souls.

RECollections.

How defective were all legal sacrifices! They, and all attending institutions, were, at best, only a shadow of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice, and the blessings of the gospel introduced by him. The frequent repetition of those sacrifices was a

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plain

NOTES.

* The just shall live by faith might be better rendered, as Dr. Owen observes, (according to the order in which the words stand) *The just by faith shall live.* (*ο δικαιος εν πιστις ζωειται*.)

† That the persons intended in this last clause of the verse, are different from

those mentioned in the former, is evident to me; because of the opposition that, both in the prophet *Habakkuk*, and in this and the following verse, is made between them and those that *live by faith*, and do not draw back to perdition; but believe to the saving of the soul.

plain proof of their imperfection; they could not prevent the returns of guilt upon the conscience; nor could they possibly take away sin, or be pleasing to God for that purpose. But how meritorious and effectual is the sacrifice of Christ, who freely came into an incarnate state, according to ancient purposes and records, to fulfil his Father's will by offering up himself! This alone is sufficient for purging all that believe in him, from every iniquity, and recommending them to God's acceptance, as a people dedicated to his service; and for perfecting all that concerns them: And our great Lord is now exalted, as a priest on his throne, at the right hand of the eternal Father, where he must reign till all his enemies be subdued under his feet. And O what a blessed security have the people of God in him, and in the covenant of grace, which the Holy Ghost has recorded, with a view to gospel-times, in the writings of the Old Testament! It is now ratified, and all its blessings are purchased for them by the death of Christ, on whose account God will write his law and his gospel in their hearts, and will so thoroughly forgive all their sins, as never more to remember any of them against them. What rich encouragement then have we to draw near to God in Christ, with humble boldness, and full assurance of faith! Jesus our High Priest has opened a new and living way to the throne of grace, through his crucified flesh, and now appears in heaven itself to recommend us and our prayers to divine acceptance, by the sprinkling of his blood, and the sanctifying influences of his Spirit. But how watchful ought we to be against the beginnings of apostacy! If our love and zeal for every good work be in a declining state, and we grow cool and indifferent about attending on religious assemblies, and gospel-ordinances, we have reason to fear, lest we fall after the example of some other professors of Christ, that have revolted from him; and the thoughts of awful trials, and of death and judgment, as near approaching, should excite us to the greater care herein. Ah! how extremely dangerous is the case of apostates, who, after they have been convinced of the truth of the gospel, vilify the Son of God; depreciate the blood of the covenant, whereby he was consecrated, to the remaining part of his priestly office; and treat the Spirit of all grace with malignant contempt! As there is no other sacrifice for sin than that which they reject and despise, they can have nothing to expect, but judgment without mercy, and flaming wrath to consume them: And as their sin is more abundantly aggravated, than any transgressions of *Moses's* law, for which offenders were put to death, we must suppose, from the reason of things, that they deserve a proportionally heavier vengeance; and we are assured from divine testimony, that the great God will assert his own prerogative, in calling them to a severe account for all their wilful abuses of gospel-light and grace. Alas! how dreadful is it to fall into the hands of his provoked power and justice, who lives for ever to inflict the sorest punishment upon impenitent sinners! But whatever losses, troubles, or reproaches true believers may suffer for Christ; they ought not to cast away their humble confidence and joy in him, and their holy profession of his name; as being satisfied in their own minds, that they have a more substantial, and abiding inheritance in heaven. This is indeed a great recompence of reward, which the faithful God will give them according to his gracious promise; and the prospect of this, together with a remembrance of their former experience of divine light and support, under their various tribulations for Christ, and compassionate regard to fellow-sufferers, should encourage their faith and hope, and animate their patience amidst further difficulties that may befall them: For in a very little time the Lord Jesus will certainly come by death and judgment, and will not tarry one moment beyond the set time, for their salvation.—Upon the whole then, how wide is the difference between nominal professors, and sincere believers! One is in danger of drawing back to perdition, and falling under divine abhorrence; but the other is justified by faith, and by means of his faith lives to-God here, and shall live with him for ever hereafter, as having believed to the saving of his soul.

C H A P. XI.

The apostle describes the excellent nature and efficacy of faith, I,—3. Exemplifies it in several instances and effects, with an intimation of its necessity, from the fall of man to Noah's days, 4,—6. From Noah to Moses, 7,—13. And from Moses to the end of the Old Testament dispensation, 24,—39. And concludes with a declaration of the still better state of believers under the gospel dispensation, ver. 40.

TEXT.

NOW faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, to give you a summary account of the excellent nature and effects of all divine faith*, inclusive of that which we have been speaking of as unto salvation, (chap. x. 38, 39.) It may be in general described after the following manner; True faith gives a sort of present subsistence in the mind and heart unto, and a confident expectation of, all future blessings, which, on the foot of the promise of that God who cannot lie, are as fully ascertained and realized to the believer's comfort, and have their proper influence upon him, as though they were already present in actual possession; and it gives us as clear and convincing a demonstration, merely on the credit of divine revelation, as to the truth of things that are invisible to the corporal eye, as though they were ever so plainly exhibited to our view, like the things that daily offer to our sight.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report,

2 For by the realizing and evidencing exercise of faith, our godly ancestors of all generations, from the time of the first promise of the seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, (Gen. iii. 15.) to the end of the Jewish dispensation, obtained a noble testimony from God, though evil spoken of by wicked men; a record of which is left particularly with respect to some of them in his word; that they were righteous persons, through the righteousness of faith, and that they

NOTE.

* The description given of faith in this verse, and exemplified in the various following instances, I take, with the learned Dr. Owen and others, to be a description of faith, inclusive indeed of that which is justifying, but not under the strict notion of it, merely as justifying: For this is only, as it has a regard to, and depends upon Christ and his righteousness; but here is no mention of him as the object of faith; and in several of the instances that are produced in the following parts of this chapter to exem-

plify it, there is no notice taken of him, or of his salvation, but only of temporal blessings, which were obtained by faith: And yet they may all be considered as so many proofs and evidences of the truth and efficacy of justifying faith in real believers on Christ, and of its more extensive exercise to the glory of God, and their own encouragement to go on in a course of dependence upon him, and obedience to him, amidst all the difficulties and dangers of every kind that surround them in this sinful world.

they pleased God in their walk before him. (ver. 4, 5, 7.)

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

3 As to the *evidence of things not seen*, which is one part of the description of faith, (ver. 1.) though by the light of nature we may justly conclude from the beauty and order of the creation, that there was a first cause of all its wonderful fabric; yet it is by faith in divine revelation, and by this only, as resting merely upon the authority of God therein, that we certainly and clearly know, beyond all that could be suggested by natural reason, that the upper and lower worlds, the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, were formed, fashioned, and finished, (*κατασκευασται*) by the all-powerful and effective word of God's command *, who in framing their several parts, and setting them in their proper order, said, Let it be so, and it was so. (Gen. i. 7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30.) He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. (Psalm xxxiii. 6, 9.) And this he did unto the producing of all the visible things of the creation, such as the sun, moon, and stars, the earth, and all the objects of our senses, out of a confused chaos, which was created out of nothing, and, being covered with darkness, was without form, and void; (Gen. i. 1, 2.) and which chaos itself has now no apparent existence; all things being ranged into their due order, and made visible by the invisible power of God. (Rom. i. 20.)

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by

4 As to the other part of the description of faith, as *the substance of things hoped for*, (ver. 1.) it was by faith in God's appointment of typical sacrifices of atonement †, that Abel, the younger, but pious son of

NOTES.

* Though Christ is often spoken of as *the word* (*ὁ λόγος*) and *the worlds* are said to be *made by him*; yet the expression here used is different from that by which he is denominated; and this word (*ἐντα*) signifies a word spoken, but is never used for the person of Christ, who is styled *the Logos*; and so it is here meant of the word of command, as appears from the places cited in the paraphrase.

† A late learned writer observes, and supports it with just criticism, that the Greek word, (*καύω*) in the comparative degree, signifies *greater*, or *fuller*, or *more in number*, rather than in *value*, in which last sense it is not used in the whole New Testament; and so it intimates that Abel brought *more sacrifice*, to wit, the *mincha*, or *meat-offering*, and an *animal sacrifice*, which was more than Cain did,

who brought only the *mincha*, or *meat-offering* of the fruits of the earth. Accordingly Abel's offering is called in the plural number his *gifts*, at the close of the verse; (see Kennicott's discourse on the oblations of Cain and Abel, p. 197, 8, 9.) and in another place he adds, p. 234. *The Lord had respect to Abel, and also to his mincha, or offering*, because accompanied with an animal sacrifice; but unto Cain, and to his *mincha*, or offering, he had not respect, because he brought no animal sacrifice. This naturally leads us to conclude that Abel offered with faith in the great sacrifice of atonement, and Cain without faith in it; and so, if it cannot be certainly gathered from the more general use of the word, it may, from the nature of the thing, that Abel's offering was in reality, and in God's account, more excellent than Cain's.

by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead, yet speaketh.

of *Adam*, looking forward to the promised seed, who should bruise the serpent's head, (*Gen. iii. 15.*) presented to God a greater and compleater sacrifice than his wicked brother *Cain*, who offered only the *mincha*, or meat-offering of such fruit of the ground as came to hand, (*Gen. iv. 3.*) in acknowledgment of God, as the Creator and Governor of the world; but offered no atoning sacrifice in acknowledgment of his own sin, and need of pardon; while *Abel*, together with an offering of the best of that sort of fruit, offered also a bloody sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock, with the fat thereof, (*Gen. iv. 4.*) as a sacrifice, which under an humble sense of his guilt, and of his needing an atonement, he presented to the Lord with a believing reference to the Lamb of God, or the great propitiatory sacrifice, which *Abel's* typified, and which the Messiah would offer for the remission of sin; by means of which faith he obtained a testimony from God in his own conscience, and by some visible token from heaven*; that he was justified through the righteousness of faith; God thereby manifestly declaring, that he approved and accepted of his sacrificial oblations, as having a respect first to *Abel*, and then to his offering. (*Gen. iv. 4.*) And by means of this faith, (the record of which, as well as of its acceptance, and of *Cain's* enmity to him on that account, is handed down in the word of God) *Abel*, though dead many ages ago, instructs us that, ever since the fall of man, the way of a sinner's acceptance with God is only through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ; and that the blood of innocent persons cries to heaven for vengeance to come down on the heads of their murderers, and especially of such as persecute them to death for righteousness sake, after the example of wicked *Cain*, who murdered his brother, *because his works were righteous, and his own were evil.* (1 John iii. 12.)

5 By faith *Enoch* was translated that he should not see death: and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation

5 It was by faith that *Enoch*, the seventh from *Adam*, was by an extraordinary miraculous exertion of divine power and mercy, actually caught up in his whole person from earth to heaven, the habitation of God's glory, to enjoy him there in a state of immortality, for which his body underwent a refining change, like that which the bodies of the saints, that may be living

N O T E

* There was some token, by which instances, (*Lev. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 1 Chron. xxi. 26. and 2 Chron. vii. 1.*) to testify his acceptance of the offering, and that justice seized upon the sacrifice, instead of the sinner who offered it, and he afterwards often did in various other for whom it was offered.

tion he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

living upon earth, shall pass through, at the general resurrection from the dead; (1 Cor. xv. 51.) he being thus highly favoured of the Lord, that, like them, (1 Thess. iv. 17.) he might be exempted from dying, which in the Hebrew idiom is called *seeing death*, or sensibly undergoing it by such a dissolution of this mortal frame, as consists in a separation of soul and body, according to the general law which has passed upon mankind for the first transgression. (Rom. v. 12.) And whatever inquiries and searches might be made after him, he was no more to be found in this world: The eyes that had seen him, saw him no more; (Job xx. 9.) because God had taken him by a peculiar indulgence to himself, to dwell in his immediate presence on high: For before he was favoured with this miraculous and happy rapture of soul and body up to heaven, he had a divine testimony in his own conscience, by a private suggestion or witness of the Spirit; and had afterwards a further public testimony given to him in the writings of Moses, that, before he was thus translated, he was accepted of God; and had, in an eminent manner of walking closely in communion with God, and in a course of faith, love, and holy obedience, (Gen. v. 24.) been highly pleasing to him, through the promised Messiah, of whom Enoch prophesied, saying, *Behold the Lord comes with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all*, &c. (Jude ver. 14, 15.)

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

6 But without this kind of faith*, as it was impossible for Abel and Enoch, so it is for us to do any thing in such a spiritual and holy manner, as is well pleasing in the sight of God: For whosoever he be that approaches to God in prayer, and in other acts of religious worship, in order to his finding acceptance with him, he ought, and it is absolutely necessary for him in the first place, to be firmly persuaded in his own mind, by that faith which is *the evidence of things not seen*, (ver. 1.) that, according to divine revelation, there certainly is a God, who, though invisible, has an eternal, necessary, and unchangeable existence, in distinction from, and opposition to, all the

N O T E.

* As I cannot but think that Enoch's, as well as Abel's faith, had a respect to the promised Messiah, and that therefore the offering of Abel, and the holy walk of Enoch, were testified to, as acceptable and well pleasing to God; so it seems to me that the faith here spoken of, with an immediate reference to these instances, as that, *without which it is impossible to please God*, is to be considered, together

with the belief of his existence, as of the same nature with theirs, in its regard to God through Christ, though it be not expressed, but is only to be gathered from what was said about the actings of their faith, in things pertaining to acceptance with God to eternal life. And the whole context forbids our taking this to be the Heathens'-creed, as some would have it.

the idols of the heathen, and all that are not *by nature God*: (Gal. iv. 8.) And he must further believe with that faith, which is the *substance of things hoped for*, (ver. 1.) that this infinitely perfect and blessed God himself is, according to his promise to *Abraham*, (Gen. xv. 1.) *the exceeding great reward* of, and a bountiful distributor of all the blessings of providence, grace, and glory, to those who, under a consciousness of their own wants and unworthiness, humbly, earnestly, and perseveringly seek his face and favour in Christ with their whole hearts, according to his word, in the diligent use of all the means of his appointment, and in a reliance on his covenant-promises, for all acceptance with him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

7 By faith as *the evidence of things not seen*, (ver. 1.) *Noah, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and was righteous* in his account, (Gen. vi. 8. and vii. 1.) and who, like *Enoch*, walked with God in all holy obedience, fully depended on the truth of the divine admonition, which was given him, (*κατανοήσας*) relating to events, of which there was no present appearance; as particularly that, for the wickedness of the people, God would bring a universal deluge to drown the old world, in which he lived; and that, of the whole human race, only he and his wife and three sons, and their wives, who as yet had no children, should be preserved alive: (Gen. vi. 12, 13, 18.) And being possessed with a religious awe and reverence of God, (*υπακούσας*) and fear of his judgments, he, according to his direction, and in obedience to his command, (Gen. vi. 14, 15, 16.) was excited to, and actually did prepare materials, and fit them for, and frame them into a large floating vessel*, for the safe preservation, as he believed it would be, of himself and his family, consisting only of eight souls, (1 Pet. iii. 20.) that they might not be swallowed up in the flood: By which faith of his in the truth and power, justice and mercy of God, as revealed to him; and by his building the ark, in obedience to the divine commandment; as also by his discourse, as a *preacher of righteousness*, (2 Pet. ii. 5.) he both practically and doctrinally condemned the unbelief and disobedience of the rest of the world, that slighted all the solemn warnings, which God in his great long suffering had given

N O T E.

* *The ark* was nearly of an oblong square, with a flat bottom and sloped sides, capacious enough to hold all the living creatures, and sufficient provisions for them, that were ordered to go into this ark. (See *Univ. Hist.* book I. p. 103. edit. 1.)

ven to them by him, and by the strivings of his Spirit with them under his ministry, for an hundred and twenty years together; (*Gen. vi. 3.*) thereby leaving them without excuse, and vindicating the justice of God in bringing such a sweeping desolation upon them, for their obstinate and aggravated wickedness: And by his faith in the promised Messiah, for the spiritual and eternal blessings, which were to be brought in by, and found alone in him, (of which the ark, for the safety of all that were in it, was an eminent type) he, as to be an inheritor of salvation, was interested in that righteousness of Christ, which is received by faith, and imputed for righteousness unto the justification of all that believe in him, without difference. (*Rom. iii. 21,—26.*)

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

8 It was by faith that the renowned patriarch *Abraham*, of whom the *Jews* boast, and from whom they derive their pedigree and all their privileges, and who is styled the *friend of God*, and the *father of all them that believe*, (*Jam. ii. 23.* and *Rom. iv. 11.*) when he had a call from God to go forth from *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, his own native country, and to leave his idolatrous kindred and his father's house, and every thing that was dear unto him there, (*Gen. xi. 31.* and *xii. 1.*) and to remove to another country, which God would show him, even the land of *Canaan*, (*Gen. xii. 5.*) which he himself should receive, in right and title, by the free gift of God, (*Gen. xv. 7.*) and which his posterity after him, for generations to come, should receive in possession, as an inheritance, (*Gen. xii. 7.* and *Acts vii. 5.*) that was typical of a better in heaven; It was, I say, by a noble act of mere faith, that *Abraham* yielded a chearful obedience to the command of God, as being fully satisfied, that what God had promised, his faithfulness, power, and goodness, would certainly perform in his own way and time; and thereupon he readily departed from his own country, friends, and relations, and set out for some other place, which God might direct him to; though, at that time, he neither knew the way to it, nor what country it should be; God, for the greater trial of his faith, and for putting the higher honour upon it, having concealed this from him till after he had left *Ur* of the *Chaldees*. (See the note on *Acts vii. 2.*)

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

9 It was by faith, that he afterward wandered about, like a pilgrim and stranger, in the land of *Canaan*, which by this time God had told him was the land that he meant to give his seed for an inheritance, in the promise he had made to him. (*Gen. xii. 7.*) Here he sojourned as one exposed to difficulties and dangers, but depending on divine protection in a foreign

reign country, the inhabitants of which were quite different from himself, in temper, religion, and manners; he dwelling among them, not in any settled habitation, but in tents, which were fastened to the ground by stakes and cords, and were moveable from place to place, as occasions required; and which, under divine direction, he often took down in one place and pitched again in another, for the present accommodation of himself and family. And after his son *Isaac*, and his grandson *Jacob* were born, they lived with him in like tents, and in a like wandering state; even they, who, as his offspring, were heirs, together with himself, of one and the same promise, which God made to him and his seed. And as this was a lively emblem of the state of all true believers, who are pilgrims and strangers on earth; so the father of the faithful was well satisfied with his condition, as an unsettled sojourner, without any possession in the land of his pilgrimage, beyond a burying place which he bought of the sons of *Heib.* (Gen. xxiii. 3, 4, &c. and xxvi. 10. compared with *Acts* vii. 5.)

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

10 For God having said to him, *Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward;* and having promised in an everlasting covenant that he would be *his God, and the God of his seed,* and that in *his seed,* meaning the Messiah, *all the nations of the earth should be blessed,* (Gen. xv. 1. and xvii. 7. and xxii. 18.) his faith, resting on those gracious words and promises of a God, who cannot lie, looked further than that earthly inheritance to the heavenly one, which was typified by it; and this he, in the exercise of his faith, most of all desired, ultimately expected, and firmly hoped to enjoy in that better state, which for its security, privileges, grandeur and glory, regularity and order, largeness and affluence of all sublime riches, honours and delights, may well be emphatically called *a city*; and which for its strength, firmness, and duration, in opposition to tents and tabernacles, and indeed in opposition to all the cities of this world, that are liable to be overthrown, and will moulder away by length of time, may be said, with the greatest propriety and eminence, to be built upon solid and immovable foundations; such as the unchangeable purpose and promises of God, and the merit and mediation of the promised Messiah, *whose day Abraham saw, and was glad;* (John viii. 56.) the contriver, former, and finisher of which city, as its divine and only architect and director, is no less than the great and blessed God himself, who, by his own infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, prepared it from the foundation of the world, to be the habitation of his own glory; and of

11 Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

all his saints with him for ever; (Mat. xxv. 34.) and to it is a *building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* (2 Cor. v. 1.)

11 It was by faith also that even Sarah herself, (*καὶ αὐτὴ Σαρρα*) the beloved wife of Abraham, being recovered from her unbelief*, which she manifested by laughing, when she first heard the promise of her having a son, (*Gen. xviii. 12.—14.*) was miraculously invigorated, and enabled, beyond all expectation, and all ordinary operations of natural causes, to conceive a male child in the common way of generation; and she was in due season safely delivered of a son, to whom, as her offspring, the covenant of promises to Abraham was designed to be fulfilled; (*Gen. xvii. 21. and xxi. 12.*) and by faith she received this ability to conceive and bear a son, after she had all along been barren and dead, as to any power of this kind before, (*Gen. xi. 30. and Rom. iv. 19.*) and had now lived (being ninety years old, *Gen. xvii. 17.*) past the usual teeming age. This wonderful strength for conceiving and undergoing all the agonies of labour and travail unto the bringing forth of Isaac, was granted her, not for her faith, as though that were the meritorious cause of it; but by means of her faith, which was graciously owned and honoured, as she trusted in the Lord, that he, to whom nothing is too hard to do, as he told her, (*Gen. xviii. 14.*) and who is truth itself, and had made her a promise of a son, would faithfully perform it.

12 Therefore sprang there even of

12 Therefore, in answer to her's, as well as Abraham's faith, there descended a vast progeny, even from his

N O T E.

* When Sarah first heard the promise of the Lord, the Angel of the covenant, that *she should have a son*, she, as well as Abraham, might probably take him to be only some stranger of the human race, who came with two others that way: It seems that she did not see him, the door of the tent being between him and her, when he spake these words; and as they contained a promise of what appeared to her an impossibility in her circumstances, she secretly laughed within herself, in a way of deriding it: But when the Lord reproved her for such an incredulous manner of laughing, by which she perceived that he, who knew what she had done in secret, was more than a man; and when he backed his reproof with saying, *Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed will I return unto thee according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son; then*

Sarah was afraid, as repenting of what she had said; and yet, in the fright, surprise, flutter, and hurry of her mind, denied it: But it seems that, upon the whole, and especially after the further discovery which the Lord, who spoke to her, had made of himself as the true Jehovah, in his conversation immediately afterward with Abraham, she believed the promise, as given by him, who was able to make it good: And this is what our apostle refers to, without taking any notice of her preceding unbelief, which, together with her falsehood, was mercifully pardoned for the sake of that promised seed, the Messiah, who proceeded from the loins of Isaac, the child she afterwards conceived and brought forth. (See and compare the account given of these things in the xviiith and former part of the xxist chapter of Genesis.)

of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.

his own single person by her; and *that* from him, when he himself, being an hundred years old, (*Gen. xvii. 17.*) was by reason of that great age accounted to be as much past begetting any children, as though he had been actually dead*. And the prodigious multitude that, in succeeding generations, proceeded from his loins in a descent from *Isaac*, was, to speak in a proverbial way, as numerous as the stars of heaven, according to God's promise to him; (*Gen. xv. 5.*) yea, as he afterwards expressed it in another promise, (*Gen. xxii. 17.*) they were like the grains of sand on the sea-shore, which are past all account.

13 These all died in faith, not having

13 All these last mentioned believers, *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob* †, not only lived by faith, which

N O T E S.

* The resolution of the difficulty which arises from what is here said concerning *Abraham*, that he was *as good as dead*, and from his many years afterwards (as is generally thought) having had several children by *Keturah* another wife, *Gen. xxv. 1.* is attempted most commonly, by supposing that God miraculously renewed the vigour of *Abraham's* as well as of *Sarah's* body, through their faith; and that this continued to *Abraham* many years afterwards.—But Mr. *Hallet*, in his supplement to Mr. *Peirce's* paraphrase and notes on this epistle, supposes, and has taken a great deal of pains to prove, (and I think with fair probability) that *Moses's* history of *Abraham's* marrying *Keturah* is not set in the exact chronological order, because he prudently chose to finish the account of *Sarah* and her son *Isaac*, without interrupting it with the affair of *Keturah*, which was foreign to this point, but proper to be afterwards taken notice of. This writer likewise gives several other instances in which the order of time is not observed in the sacred history, as it frequently is neglected with good judgment in many other authors of note; and by comparing the several parts of the narration in *Genesis*, he concludes that *Abraham's* children by *Keturah* were really born before this, which he had by *Sarah*. Curious inquirers may consult his very large and elaborate note on this verse; and if his thoughts be admitted, the whole difficulty for reconciling these passages is effectually removed at once.

† All these is not to be understood as including *Abel, Noah, and Enoch*. For *Enoch* did not die, but was translated, that he should not see death, as had been said, *ver. 5.*; and though *Abel* and *Noah*

died, as well as lived in faith; yet they cannot be referred to by the words *all these*. For it is expressly said, *ver. 15.* of the persons here intended, that *if they had been mindful of that country, from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned*; which can be applied only to *Abraham* and *Sarah*, who in their own persons came out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, (*Gen. xi. 31.*) and to *Isaac* and *Jacob*, who as reckoned to, and included in their parents, might be said to come out from thence, in like manner as *Joseph's* two sons, which were born in *Egypt*, were reckoned to the souls of the house of *Jacob*, which came into *Egypt*, to make up the number of threescore and ten, (*Gen. xli. 27.*) and as God speaks of *Israel's* coming out of *Egypt*, (*Hag. ii. 5.*) many ages after he brought their ancestors out of that land; and as *Abraham* and *Sarah*, so *Isaac* and *Jacob*, were said in our foregoing context, *ver. 9.* to be heirs of the same promise, to which, together with the promise of an innumerable seed like the stars, and the sand upon the sea-shore, *ver. 11, 12.* the promises, in the faith of which they died, most naturally refer: And as *Canaan* was an eminent type of heaven, and the *Messiah* was the great and capital blessing intended in the promise of the seed which should spring from *Abraham* and *Sarah*; so the faith in which they, inclusive of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, lived and died, ultimately respected the heavenly inheritance, which they looked for and desired, *ver. 10, 16.* as also the *Messiah*, in whom all nations should be blessed: For we are told, *Gen. xv. 5, 6.* the place here referred to, that the Lord brought *Abraham* abroad, and said, *Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars,*

having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

which was their great support under all difficulties and trials; but their faith (as all faith that is of a right kind does) held out to the end of their days; and they died in a lively and comfortable exercise of it, with respect to blessings thereafter to be enjoyed by themselves in a better world, as well as by their posterity in this; they not having been actual partakers of the great and good things promised, neither for themselves, nor for their offspring, as they not only had not received possession of the promised land of *Canaan*, nor lived to see innumerable descendents from them; but, (which their faith principally pitched upon) as they were not yet arrived at the heavenly state of blessedness and glory, nor had seen the promised Saviour actually sent into the world, which was the great blessing ultimately intended and realized by faith in the promises: But they saw them, especially relating to the Messiah, by an eye of faith, as things which certainly would be accomplished, not immediately, but at a great distance of time to come; and they understood the meaning of them, and discerned something of the wisdom, power, grace, and faithfulness of God, that shone forth in the promises of them: And they were fully convinced and satisfied in their own minds, that they were the true sayings of God, and should infallibly be fulfilled in due season: And thereupon they fiducially and affectionately received, and joyfully embraced them, in their special reference to the Messiah, and to all heavenly happiness through him, as things of the most excellent nature and of the highest importance: And under this believing view, persuasion, and cordial reception of them, they freely and boldly owned, in word and deed, and were willing to have it publicly known, as is expressly recorded of *Abraham* and *Jacob*, (*Gen. xxiii. 4.* and *xlvi. 9.*) that they looked upon themselves, not as at home in this world; but as, in a spiritual sense, aliens and foreigners, whose hearts and hopes, interest and happiness, were not placed on any of its concerns, and as travellers, like pilgrims, passing through the earth, even as, in a literal sense, they severally were in the land of *Canaan*: All which was a lively emblem of the state of God's people in this world; every one of them may well say with propriety, as *David* did, *I am a stranger with thee,*

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stars, if thou canst number them; so shall thy seed be; and he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness, which the apostle interprets with relation to Abraham's faith in the

Messiah for justification, saying, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.* (*Rom. iv. 3.*)

thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. (Pl. xxxix. 12.)

14 For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country.

14 For these ancient saints, and all who, with like faith in the promises, speak of themselves as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, do hereby both professedly and constructively make it manifest to all about them, that, instead of setting their affections on this world, or rating their happiness by it, or wishing to have their portion, and to live always in it, they keep in view, desire, hope for, and earnestly seek after their heavenly Father's country, (*πατρίδα πνευματικήν*) a large and delightful place of abode, which, as his children by spiritual birth, is their own native home, where they shall dwell with him for ever.

15 And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned:

15 And to shew that the country, which they so diligently sought, and were going to, was not their former home in another country upon earth, It is very certain that, if they had been thoughtful about, hankering after, and desirous to return to *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, their original country, and to their dear friends, relations, and possessions there, from which, in obedience to God's command, *Abraham* and his wife, and *Isaac* and *Jacob* (as included in them, and afterwards approving of what they had done) cheerfully departed to go into the promised land of *Canaan*, they had time and liberty enough, and might easily have found means and conveniences for going back with safety thither; the way to it being short, and easy; and there being none that would have opposed the attempt.

16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.

16 But now, even while they had opportunity, if they chose it, of returning to the land of the *Chaldees*, all their desire (as that of every true believer does) tended to, and ultimately centered in, a nobler settlement in the transcendently more excellent world, that is of a different and sublimer nature, more satisfying, glorious, and abiding, than that country which they had left, and would not return to; or than that in which they now were strangers and pilgrims; or indeed than any other, the most pleasant that can be imagined upon earth; and this is no other than heaven itself*, which is *an inheritance incorruptible, and*

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* This carries the highest evidence that the *Patriarchs* had a revelation and promise of a future state of glory in heaven: For otherwise they could not have looked by faith for a city, whose builder and maker is God, as it is said they did, ver. 10. Nor could they have had such notions of it, to engage their earnestly desiring and seeking after it, as we are

here, and ver. 14. told they did. And though *Canaan* was an eminent type of heaven; yet that land itself could not be the heavenly country here intended; for this is called a better country, in opposition to that in which they were now pilgrims, and which they themselves never did enjoy; and God himself is said to be the builder and maker of the city, (ver.

and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. (1 Pet. i. 4.) And as their hearts were so set upon their heavenly inheritance, in preference to all others; and their faith was the evidence of things not seen, as well as the substance of things hoped for; (ver. 1.) so in consequence of this, though not for any merit in it, God in his infinite condescension and love does not disdain, or think it any dishonour to himself, to be in a peculiar and distinguishing manner their covenant-God and Father; as he would, if he had nothing better to bestow upon them, than the good things of this world; and especially, if he left them in afflicted circumstances, so destitute of those comforts, as they were all their days: But he, on the contrary, counts it his glory to be their God, and to be claimed, and called upon by them, as such, and to be publicly known by this title in the world, as appears by his saying to Moses, (Exod. iii. 6, 15.) *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.* And he has given the fullest and strongest evidence of his being their God, and owning himself to be so: For, according to his special relation to them, and their faith and hope in him, he has graciously appointed, laid out, framed, and fitted up (*τροπαιοῦσι*) a glorious city of habitation for their whole persons, soul and body*, to dwell in with himself, even a *building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* (2 Cor. v. 1. see the note there.)

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten son:

17 Now, to return particularly to the faith of Abraham, in some remarkable after-actings of it under the most difficult and trying circumstances: When Abraham had in the forementioned miraculous manner obtained a son by his wife Sarah, (ver. 11, 12.) and was, for the most eminent trial and proof of the sincerity and strength of his faith, love, and obedience,

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(ver. 10.) which he prepared for them, in this heavenly country; whereas Jerusalem, in the land of Canaan, was built by the hands of men; and these patriarchs had no notice given them, that God would ever prepare such a city for their own possession; nor could they have any expectation that they themselves should ever enjoy it: But their faith looked to the heavenly inheritance, which God has prepared for them that love him.

* God's saying to Moses, *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, long after they were dead, is alleged by our Lord him-

self, as a proof of the resurrection of the saints to eternal life; *Matth. xxii. 32.* (see the note there) and so God's preparing for them a city, includes a resurrection of the body to immortal glory, as well as the happiness of the soul in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity. Accordingly, some of the ancient believers are spoken of, as expecting to obtain a better resurrection, (ver. 35.) and therefore they, being the sons of God, might well be said to wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, as the apostle speaks of New Testament-believers. *Rom. viii. 23.*

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ence, called to offer him up as a burnt-offering to God, and to sacrifice him with his own hand, even his beloved son *Isaac* *; (*Gen. xxii. 1, 2.*) He readily obeyed the divine order, so as in good earnest to resolve, and do what in him lay, to execute it; notwithstanding all that unbelief might have suggested against it; and, having prepared all things for it, he would actually have slain him; as he was just at the point of doing, had not a counter-command, by an immediate voice from heaven at that very instant, prevented it. (*Gen. xxii. 11, 12.*) And this great believer, who had been favoured with, and had embraced and firmly depended upon, the promises of what great and good things God would do for him and his seed, and especially upon the grand comprehensive promise, which was often repeated, relating to the coming of the Messiah himself through *Isaac's* loins, did nevertheless, by another act of faith on the supreme and indisputable authority of God, as commanding it, freely resign and offer him up as a sacrifice to the Lord, in the manner before-mentioned, even this his dearly beloved and only begotten son by *Sarah*, and the only son of his hopes, according to the promises, which were to be fulfilled by means of this son, or not at all.

18 Of whom it was said, That in *Isaac* shall thy seed be called :

18 Concerning which very son, God, to comfort *Abraham* at his being obliged to part with *Ishmael*, said to him, (*Gen. xxi. 12.*) *In Isaac shall thy seed be called*; thereby assuring him, that it was not by the son of *Hagar* the bond-woman, nor by any other of

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* Though *Abraham* was prevented executing his design, in offering up *Isaac*; yet he fully intended it, set about it, and would undoubtedly have done it, in obedience to the divine command, had he not been restrained at the critical juncture by a voice from heaven; and his proceeding so far, as he did in the integrity of his heart, was accepted in the divine construction, as if he had actually slain him, as appears from the reason that is given of the prohibition in the next words; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. (*Gen. xxii. 9, — 12.*)—The enemies of divine revelation have made hideous outcries against this command of God, and *Abraham's* obedience to it. But though it would have been indeed a murderous act in *Abraham* to sacrifice his son, unless he had received a positive command from God for it; and though, without this divine warrant, neither his piety toward

God, nor his natural affection, especially to such a son, would have suffered him deliberately to design and go about it; yet he was sure that God had commanded it, and as God has an absolute and uncontrollable right to order the taking away of any man's life by what means or instruments he pleases, by the knife, or the sword, as well as by the pestilence and other diseases, what *Abraham* did, and was about to do, was every way both justifiable and commendable, as it was a mere act of the highest and most self-denying obedience to God's plain command. And this can never be drawn into a precedent, for any one, that has no such plain and express command from God, to take away the innocent life of another, any more than a private person can be warranted to kill another, without the authority of the civil magistrate, who has a right to order his executioner to put criminals to death.

of his own sons; but only by this son of *Sarah* the free-woman, (*Gal. iv. 30.*) that the promise should be fulfilled, which he had made of an innumerable posterity, that should be called to inherit both temporal and spiritual blessings, and particularly the great promise of the Messiah's proceeding from his loins according to the flesh, in whom his spiritual seed of all nations should be blessed, through faith in him.

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

19 But notwithstanding all those heavy damps upon his own love to, and believing hopes about this son of the promise, and all those seeming inconsistencies with the promise itself, which was the most touching and grievous trial of his faith that can be imagined, he made no difficulty of resolving, and attempting to do what God had commanded him, in this most unaccountable instance; he having reasoned and concluded (*λογισαμενος*) in the exercise of his faith, that if he were to obey the divine order in sacrificing his son, God, to whom all things are possible, could easily raise him up to life again; and, in case the promise could not otherwise be fulfilled, would certainly give him back to him by a timely resurrection, even from the dead; from whence, to speak in a figurative way, (*εἰ παραβολῇ*) he accordingly did receive him to life, who had been in the very article of death, devoted to it, and given up as a dead son without the least hope to the contrary: And as he had before received him from his own and *Sarah's* dead bodies, as it were from the dead; so this was receiving him again in the similitude of a resurrection from the dead, and *that* as a type of the death and resurrection of Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and of the resurrection of true believers to eternal life, through him.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come.

20 It was by faith in the promise of God to *Isaac* himself, (*Gen. xxvi. 4.*) as well as to his father *Abraham* and his seed, and in the divine suggestion, which secretly directed his mind and lips to give forth prophetic predictions to his two sons *, that he first, though

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* Though it must be acknowledged, that *Rebecca's* artful and fallacious management, to obtain the blessing for *Jacob*, (*Gen. xxvii. 6.—24.*) was by no means justifiable, or fit to be imitated in any other case; yet God over-ruled it, in his infinitely wise and holy providence, for fulfilling his own gracious purpose and promise relating to *Jacob*, as he did the conspiracies of the *Jews* against Christ, for bringing about the great work of redemption by him, *Acts ii. 23.* And though *Isaac*, either not having heard, or not understood, or not duly attended

to, God's declaration to *Rebecca*, that the elder should serve the younger, (*Gen. xxv. 23.*) designed to bless *Esau*, as the first-born, but through deception blessed *Jacob*, instead of him; (*Gen. xxvii. 21.—29.*) yet he might bless him with faith in the promise, which God had made to himself, that he would make his seed to multiply, as the stars of heaven; and that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed; (*Gen. xxvi. 4.*) and he might bless *Jacob*, as firmly believing that the immediate impulse he was under to bless the son then before him, was indeed

though unwittingly as to *the person* he was then speaking to, pronounced, according to God's own sovereign determination, the chief blessing upon *Jacob* his younger son, which naturally belonged to the first-born, and included such as were both temporal and spiritual; and afterwards, he, by the same prophetic spirit, pronounced only the blessings of this world upon *Esau*; both which benedictions related to things, which he believed would take place upon their respective offsprings for generations to come, and which were accordingly fulfilled in covenant-mercies to *Jacob*, and temporal ones to *Esau*.

21 By faith *Jacob*, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of *Joseph*; and worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff.

21 As *Jacob*, the covenant-son of *Isaac*, lived, so he died, in an exercise of faith on the promises of his God, who, by the angel of the covenant, *had been with him all his life long, and redeemed him from all evil*, and who he believed would bring his posterity to the land of *Canaan*, and fulfil his promises to them. (*Gen.* xlviii. 15, 16, 21.) It was by this faith, that the venerable patriarch, when, through the infirmities of extreme old age, he was very feeble, and drew near to the grave, prayed in a solemn manner for, and by a prophetic spirit foretold, blessings that should come upon his grand-children, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, the two sons of *Joseph*; and designedly crossing his hands, under divine direction, so as to lay his right hand upon the head of *Ephraim*, the younger brother, who was placed at his left, and his left hand on the head of *Manasseh*, the elder, who was placed at his right hand, he pronounced a blessing upon each of them, distinctly declaring, in humble confidence, that God would bless them, that though both should be great, the younger should be greater than the elder; (*Gen.* xlviii. 13,—20.) and so it was in the event, as it *afterward* appeared at the numbering of the tribes, when *Ephraim's* was found to

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indeed from God, and that God would certainly confer the blessing which he was prompted to pronounce upon him in a way of prayer and prophecy: Accordingly, when he afterwards found, that, contrary to his own intention, he had blessed *Jacob* instead of *Esau*, his faith entirely acquiesced in it, saying, *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.* (*Gen.* xxvii. 33.)—This prophetic benediction included *spiritual*, as well as, yea, more than temporal blessings: For *Jacob's* whole life was full of troubles, and neither he, nor his posterity in general, had so much affluence of temporal advantages as *Esau* and his seed had. But

Jacob's blessing was that of the covenant-birthright in *Abraham's* family, which included not only a promise of the land of *Canaan*, but also of the Messiah, and of the spiritual blessings which should be derived from him, as that seed of *Abraham* in whom all nations should be blessed. And therefore *Esau* is called a *profane person*, which intimates an irreligious temper in him, for selling this birthright. (*Heb.* xii. 16. see the note there.) Accordingly, the blessing, which *Isaac* afterward pronounced upon him, *Gen.* xxvii. 39, 40. was merely of a *temporal* nature.

be greater than *Manassah's* (Numb. i. 32, 35.) and *Jacob* solemnly worshipped God *, in the most reverent posture he could, by bowing his head, and supporting himself on the top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

22 To take notice of only one instance more in the period of time from *Noah* to *Moses*. It was by faith in the promise made to *Abraham*, (Gen. xv. 13, 14.) that *Joseph*, one of the darling sons of *Jacob*, whose faith held out amidst all the adversity and prosperity he had passed through in *Egypt*, when he drew near his end, recollected and reminded his brethren, for the encouragement of their faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, (ver. 1.) that though he, who had been their protector, was soon to die, and after his decease they would be exposed to great hardships and opposition from the *Egyptians*; yet God, in his appointed time, would surely visit them in his faithfulness and kindness, and bring them out of the land of *Egypt*, and carry them unto the land, which he sware to *Abraham*, to *Isaac*, and to *Jacob*: And as he firmly believed this; so, in testimony of his faith concerning it, (Gen. l. 24, 25.) he strictly charged his brethren, taking an oath of them, to embalm his dead body, and preserve it in a safe repository, while they should continue in *Egypt*; and that whenever God should bring them out, as he surely would, from thence, and give them possession of the promised land, they should then take special care to carry his bones along with them, and bury them there; which order he gave in token of his hope of a resurrection to the eternal inheritance, of which the land of *Canaan* was a signal type, as well as that they would certainly be put into possession of that land.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a pro-

23 When, by the good providence of God, *Moses*, that great and eminent lawgiver, was born, who was to be a remarkable type of Christ, as the great ruler and deliverer of *Israel*, and the prophet which the Lord their God would raise up unto them, (Acts iii. 22.)

* This passage is quoted from Gen. xlii. 31. which we translate, *Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head*. But as the Hebrew word (יָרַד) rendered *bed*, signifies, according to different pointings, a *bed*, or a *staff*, the apostle speaks of it as a *staff*, and so it stands in the versions of the *Syriac* and the *Septuagint*; and it seems from all circumstances most natural to take it in this sense: For, according to the history, *Israel's* bowing himself in a way of divine adoration, here spoken of, was before he was sick, and before he blessed *Joseph's* sons, both of

which are expressly said to be after that and some other things, Gen. xlvii. 31. and xlviii. 1. &c. And therefore he, most probably, was sitting either on his bed-side, or on a couch, or in a chair, under the infirmities of decrepid old age, which, in the whole, amounted to an hundred and forty-seven years, Gen. xlvii. 28.; and that he might pay his adorations in a bowing posture, he supported himself by leaning on the top of his walking staff, as not being able to do it standing, or kneeling.

per child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. It was by faith that his parents, the father concealing with the mother, concealed his birth, and kept him in some private place, till he was a quarter of a year old, waiting for a convenient opportunity to dispose of him in such a way, as God might direct them to, for the preservation of his life in those perilous days. This they attempted by laying him in a sort of cradle, or open chest, made of bulrushes, and plaistered with slime or pitch to prevent the water's soaking into it; and then lodged it in a cluster of flags, which grew on the brink of the river; where Pharaoh's daughter providentially coming, and seeing his beauty, and hearing his cries, was moved with compassion towards him, and took care of him, as though he had been her own child. (Ex. ii. 1.—10.) That which influenced his parents to cast him upon providence, in this manner, for his preservation was, because his countenance struck them with admiration, and engaged their tenderest affection to him, when they observed that he was an extraordinary beautiful child, and very promising; by his surprisingly amiable aspect, for some great eminence in his day; and so might prove the happy instrument of Israel's deliverance out of their hard bondage, which they believed would certainly be brought about by some Hebrew, whom God would raise up for that glorious purpose, according to his promises; and by means of this faith, and their fearing God rather than man, they, like the religious midwives, (Ex. i. 17.) were not afraid to run the risk of their own lives, by endeavouring to save the life of this son, and so exposing themselves to the wrath of Pharaoh for disobeying his barbarous edict, which he issued out †, commanding the midwives and all his people to destroy every male that should be born of the Hebrews. (Ex. i. 15, 16, 22.)

24 When

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* A proper child (*ayun*) signifies an exceeding beautiful or comely child, and in Acts vii. 20. *Moses* is said to have been exceeding fair, (*ayun* to *Shu*) which literally rendered, as we have it in the margin, signifies fair to God; and may intimate that he was fair in the sight of God, or was of some divinely beautiful form, with an uncommon lustre in his countenance. † At the time of *Moses's* birth, Pharaoh's cruel edict for killing all the male-children that should be born to the Hebrews, was in full force, and was, doubtless, executed, as far as possible, with the utmost watchfulness and severity;

yet as no subtilty or power of man can prevail against the counsel of the Lord, whose kingdom rules over all; so he took care that the blood-thirsty design should not be brought to pass in cutting off *Moses*. And it is evident that afterwards, by the over-ruling providence of God, this commandment of the king was some way or other relaxed, or defeated; for otherwise the *Israelites* could not have so prodigiously increased, as they did, from the time of the birth of *Moses* to the time of his being sent to bring them out of *Egypt*; he being then eighty years old, as we are informed, *Exod.* vii. 7.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

27 When this famous Moses himself grew up to maturity of stature, age, and understanding, and to great attainments in wisdom, learning, and dignity, and so became every way truly great, (*μῦθος*) by the time he was forty years old; (*Acts* vii. 22, 23.) It was by faith in the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his covenant-ancestors, and in the invisible things of a better world, that he bravely despised and rejected the honours and advantages, even to his probably succeeding to the Egyptian crown, that might arise from being looked upon, owned, and treated, as the adopted son of so great a princess as Pharaoh's daughter: (see the note on *Acts* vii. 23.) And he was desirous to be known by the despicable name of an Hebrew, notwithstanding all the hardships and disgrace, which that people were then subject to, rather than to abandon their God and their religion, and to be spoken of and regarded under the high pompous title of her son: He accordingly quitted the court, and all its magnificence, and made the concerns of his afflicted brethren his own, as one who determined to take his lot with them;

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24 When this famous Moses himself grew up to maturity of stature, age, and understanding, and to great attainments in wisdom, learning, and dignity, and so became every way truly great, (*μῦθος*) by the time he was forty years old; (*Acts* vii. 22, 23.) It was by faith in the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his covenant-ancestors, and in the invisible things of a better world, that he bravely despised and rejected the honours and advantages, even to his probably succeeding to the Egyptian crown, that might arise from being looked upon, owned, and treated, as the adopted son of so great a princess as Pharaoh's daughter: (see the note on *Acts* vii. 23.) And he was desirous to be known by the despicable name of an Hebrew, notwithstanding all the hardships and disgrace, which that people were then subject to, rather than to abandon their God and their religion, and to be spoken of and regarded under the high pompous title of her son: He accordingly quitted the court, and all its magnificence, and made the concerns of his afflicted brethren his own, as one who determined to take his lot with them;

25 Renouncing, with a generous disdain, all those tempting allurements to flesh and sense; because, in the exercise of his faith, he rather chose to undergo the severest sufferings and troubles with God's own peculiar people in their oppressed and calamitous circumstances, than to gratify the flesh with an enjoyment of all the grandeur, affluence, and sensual pleasures of a pompous, idolatrous, and luxurious court, which were all defiling, uncertain, fading, and perishing; which could be but of very short continuance, and could not be indulged without sinning against God, and thereby exposing himself to everlasting wrath and ruin.

26 Such was his faith in the Messiah, who should spring from the seed of Abraham, and be their Saviour, that, upon deliberately weighing, and putting in balance the worst of religion against the best of this world, he formed this account, that the heaviest contempt, scorn, and derision, with all the persecutions that naturally follow them, and were actually endured by the Israelites, or that could be inflicted upon himself for the sake of Christ and his faith in him, whom God would anoint to be the only spiritual and effectual Redeemer of his people, and on whom all their reproaches and sufferings ultimately fell, as he, their head, accounts them to be done to himself: (*Acts* ix. 4.) All this, whatsoever others might think of it, he esteemed to be a richer gain for the glory of God, and the good of his church and of his own soul, than the

the greatest emoluments, products, and advantages of the fruitful land, and splendid court of *Egypt* could be to him, were they all in his own possession: For he by faith (*αἰσῶν*) looked off from all those perishing riches, on one hand, and beyond all those temporal hardships, on the other; and found the sweetest support in his hope of, and looking forward to, the immortal crown of glory, which he realized, as reserved for him in heaven; and which he well knew would amply recompence, and abundantly more than make amends for all the reproaches, wants, and sufferings he might undergo, for the sake of a good conscience, in his pursuit of it*.

27 By faith he forsook *Egypt*, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.

27 It was accordingly by faith in the command and promise of God, when he sent him to deliver his people out of the land of the *Egyptians*, and to bring them to a good land, (*Exod.* iii. 6,—12.) that, about forty years after † he had fled from the face of *Pharaoh*, into the land of *Midian*, (*Exod.* ii. 15. and vii. 7. compared with *Acts* vii. 23,—30.) he returned to *Egypt*; and when *Pharaoh*, under the heat of resentment at the many plagues which had been inflicted, said to him, *Get thou from me, and see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die*, *Moses* was so far from being terrified, that he replied with an unshaken boldness of faith, *Thou hast spoken well. I will see thy face again no more*; (*Exod.* x. 28, 29.) and thereupon he immediately departed from the presence of the king, and soon after took his final leave of *Egypt*, to lead the children of *Israel* out from thence, defenceless and

N O T E S.

* This respect to the recompence of reward could not relate to an inheritance in the land of *Canaan*, as some would suggest: For *Moses* had no divine warrant to support his faith and hope of personally receiving this reward; and he was never suffered to enter into that land; but in case he had, he could not have expected greater treasures of an earthly nature there, than he formerly had the fairest prospects of in *Egypt*; and he could never think it worth his while to expose himself to the greatest reproaches and persecutions for the sake of an exchange of these. This recompence of reward therefore, which he had a respect to, is evidently the same with the city, which has foundations, and the heavenly country, that are spoken of. *ver.* 10, 16, as what his believing ancestors had looked for, and desired; and so shews that he, as well as they, had a

revelation of, and had faith and hope relating to, a future state of happiness in heaven: And this is called the recompence of reward, not as though it were merited, or earned, by any one's faith, sufferings, and obedience; but as it is a rich gift of God, which he in infinite wisdom and grace freely bestows, for *Christ's* sake, upon his suffering servants, in a return of blessings upon them, that over-balance all their sufferings for him, and are chiefly conferred upon them after all their trials are ended. (*See Rom.* vi. 23. and viii. 18.)

† This relates not to his first flight from *Pharaoh*, when, upon his having slain the *Egyptian*, he feared that *Pharaoh* having heard of it would slay him; (*Exod.* ii. 14, 15.) but to his second departure from *Pharaoh*, after he was sent to deliver the children of *Israel* out of their bondage, *Exod.* vii. 2.

and unarmed as they were; he not being in the least daunted by the severe threatnings of that haughty monarch; no, nor afterwards by his mad fury, when, like an enraged and merciless tyrant, he followed the *Israelites* with a powerful army to revenge himself upon them in their utter destruction. Nothing of this kind moved him, or made him afraid of going forward in obedience to God's command; (*Ex. xiv. 13.*) but he was bold and courageous, amidst all difficulties and dangers, while a mighty pursuing host was behind them, and the Red-sea before them; and in the strength of his faith he said to the people, Fear ye not; stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord: (*Exod. xiv. 13.*) For he endured the terrors of all outward appearances of unavoidable destruction in that situation, with steadfast courage and resolution, (*vaguerly*) as having as realizing views of God by faith, and as firm a dependence upon his goodness, power, and faithfulness, for deliverance, as though with his bodily eyes he had beheld him visibly present, to save them by his out-stretched arm, whom, in his own nature and perfections, which are all spiritual, *no man has seen, nor can see.* (1 Tim. vi. 16.)

23 Through faith he kept the pass-over, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born, should touch them.

28 It was by faith in the promises, that God would bring his people out of *Egypt*; and in the promised Messiah, who should spring from them, as also in the divine institution of a standing, significant ordinance, that *Moses* himself, in obedience to God's command, observed all the rites of the paschal supper, and obliged the people of *Israel* to do the same, which was afterwards to be a commemorative sacrifice, through all generations, of the Lord's passing over the houses of the children of *Israel*, when he smote the *Egyptians*; and was prefigurative of the redeeming death of Christ, who as the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot, was our *passover sacrificed for us*: (1 Cor. v. 7. and 1 Peter i. 18, 19.) And, by a like exercise of faith, he ordered that another * temporary ordinance, annexed to the former, suitable to the then peculiar circumstances of things,

N O T E.

* Though sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb be significant, in a typical reference to the application of the blood of Christ, which is called the blood of sprinkling. Heb. xii. 24. and all the efficacy of which to our own salvation depends upon its being applied to us; yet it seems to have been but a temporary ordinance, suited to the then present occasion: For the feast of the passover is

spoken of, as a perpetual memorial and ordinance throughout their generations, *Exod. xii. 14, 24.—27.* and was accordingly kept in the most solemn manner every year; but we neither here, or any where else, read of sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb, either as appointed of God, or practised by the *Israelites* after this time.

things, should be carefully observed according to the command of God, namely, that the blood of the paschal lamb should be sprinkled upon the lintels and door-posts of the houses of the children of *Israel*, for their protection from the destroying angel, to the end that (*na*) when he was cutting off all the first-born of *Egypt*, both man and beast, and should see the blood upon the houses of the *Israelites*, he might spare the first-born of both sorts that belonged to them. (*Ex.* xii. 7, 12, 13.)

29 By faith they passed through the Red-sea, as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned.

29 To conclude the account of the wonderful effects of *Moses'* faith, which brings the whole affair of *Israel's* deliverance out of *Egypt* to its final and happy period, It was principally by means of his faith, as depending upon the power of God to make good his word of promise, in a way of obedience to his command, that when he ordered him to lift up his rod and stretch out his hand over the sea, he did so; * and thereupon the Lord, in a miraculous manner, caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and divided its waters, in so much that the *Israelites*, encouraged by this astonishing appearance of God for them, followed their leader, and went after him into the midst of the Red-sea, as upon dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left, (*Ex.* xiv. 16, 21, 22.) 'till they all passed over from the *Egyptian* to the *Arabian* shore, without the loss of one soul among them, (see the *Universal History*, Vol. I. page 305, &c. in the note) which the *Egyptians*, *Pharaoh*, and his huge host of chariots and horse-men, attempting to do, as vainly presuming without a divine warrant, which *Moses* had, that they might succeed therein, as well as the *Israelites*, were overwhelmed with the waters, and drowned

N O T E.

* They passed through the Red-sea, relates to the children of *Israel*, who were spoken of in the preceding verse; but their passing through it by faith, I am strongly inclined to think relates chiefly, if not only, to *Moses'* faith, rather than to their own: For it is only the eminent effects of his faith, that the apostle speaks of all along before, from ver. 24. down to this verse, none of which exceeded, if any of them equalled this; and the generality of the *Israelites* are represented on this very occasion, as excessively unbelieving and murmuring, and no way commendable for their faith, whatsoever some few amongst them, such as *Caleb* and *Joshua*, might be. (See *Exod.* xiv. 10,—12.) And yet upon what *Moses* further told them from the

Lord to silence their fears, and upon their seeing the waters miraculously divide at his stretching out his hand with the rod in it, ver. 13,—16. their faith was so far revived as to encourage them to venture into the broad open channel of the sea after him, who probably entered into it first as their leader: But then the deliverance was wrought, rather in answer to his faith, than theirs, in their passing through the Red-sea.—This was called the Red-sea, not from any redness of its waters or sand, as some imagine; but it took that name from its washing the borders of *Esau's* country, who was called *Edom*, which signifies red. (See *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. II. p. 90,—95.)

drowned by the sea's returning to its strength, and covering them, as soon as Moses stretched forth his hand over it again, by a second command, which the Lord gave him so to do; and there remained not so much as one of them alive; (*Ex. xiv. 23,—28.*) which was a just retaliation for the *edict*, that ordered all the male children of *Israel* to be drowned. (*Exod. i. 22.*)

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

30 To add another particular, or two, of the eminent fruits of faith, It was by means of the faith of *Joshua*, *Caleb*, and others, (in the afterwards more believing generation than the former had been) whereby they depended upon the promise, power, and veracity of God for giving them possession of the land of *Canaan*, that when, according to his command, the priests on the seventh day blew with the trumpets of rams horns, and the people gave a loud shout, the walls of *Jericho*, a fortified city, miraculously fell down flat to the ground, not by any efficacy in the blowing and shouting themselves, or by any human force whatsoever; but merely by the immediate power of God, which was exerted for that purpose, at the very instant of this appointed signal; and a breach was thereby made wide enough for the army of *Israel* to go straight forward, and enter into the city, and take it without obstruction. (See *Josh. vi. 1;—20.*)

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

31 It was by faith in the God of *Israel*, as the Lord of heaven and earth *, who had given the land of *Canaan* to his favourite people; that *Rahab*, though she was a *Gentile*, and had been (*πορν*) a whorish woman, escaped, together with all her family, the general slaughter which was made of the rest

N O T E.

* Here it may be proper to observe, that the *officious lie*, which *Rahab* the harlot told for preserving the spies, *Josh. ii. 4,—7.* was the effect, not of her *faith*, but of her *sinful dread* of the king's wrath. This lie of her's was by no means justifiable in any consistency with the eternal law of truth, and the confidence that ought to be maintained between man and man; but it was no more to our apostle's purpose to take any notice of this, in a discourse about the excellent and wonderful effects of faith, than it would have been to mention the *prevarication and falsehood* that were used for imposing upon *Isaac*, to procure his blessing for *Jacob* instead of *Esau*, (see the note on *ver. 20.*) or than to have mentioned the *sinful infirmities*, that were mixed with the faith of other per-

sons, who stand in this list. And though, as *Rahab* was afterwards incorporated with the church of *Israel*, and married to, and by that means became herself one of the ancestors of the Messiah, (*Mat. i. 5.*) we may well suppose, that then, at least, she repented, and believed in him for the pardon of this and all her other sins, and for justification to eternal life. Yet it appears to me that her faith here spoken of, and proved to be sincere by her care of the spies, related not to her spiritual and eternal salvation; (see the note on *James ii. 21.*) but only to the temporal safety of herself and family, as she really believed, according to the report she had heard, that the *Jehozab of Israel was the God of heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and had given them that land.* (*Josh. ii. 9,—13.*)

rest of the inhabitants of *Jericho*, (*Josh. vi. 21,—25.*) that obstinately disregarded, and rebelled against, though their hearts melted and were filled with terror at, the credible accounts which they, as well as *Rahab*, had heard of God's wonderful appearances for *Israel*, and of his having assured them, and confirmed it by the miraculous deliverances and victories he had already given them, that *Jericho*, together with the rest of the land, should be put into their possession: (*Josh. ii. 9,—11.*) And when, notwithstanding all this, the *Canaanites*, through their disobedience and unbelief, sought to destroy the two spies, which *Joshua* sent to take a survey of the state of things among them, this pious woman gave evident proof of the sincerity and power of her faith, by receiving those messengers into her house, and entertaining them in a kind and friendly manner, and taking care of them, that they might not fall into the hands of their enemies, who, by order of the king of *Jericho*, made strict inquiry after them, that they might apprehend and kill them, or deliver them up to him. (*Josh. ii. 1,—7.*)

32. And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

32 And what further instances of the power and triumphs of faith need I add after all these that have been already insisted upon? It would be almost endless to recite, and enlarge upon the many others, that might be named. I shall therefore only just mention some of them, which from the sacred history ye may easily recollect: For it is more than my time, and the designed limits of this epistle would admit of, to go into a particular narrative of the faith of *Gideon** and its wonderful effects, who believed and obeyed the command of God to him, *to throw down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove that was by it, and build another altar to the Lord his God*, as also to engage, with only three hundred men, the vast ar-

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N O T E.

* The persons mentioned in this verse are not recited just in the order of time in which they lived, that being of no importance to the apostle's argument: For *Barak* lived before *Gideon*, and *Samson* before *Jephthae*, and *Samuel* before *David*; nor are the effects of their faith laid down in the following verses, with any exact reference to them in the same order, in which he has here named them, as though the first of these effects were to be applied to the faith of the first of these persons, and the next to the second, and so on; nor are they all to be confined to these particular persons, much less are they all to be ascribed to any one

of them. It was sufficient that these noble effects of faith were found in one or other of the Old Testament-saints; and the apostle's promiscuously setting down several persons all together by name, with an intimation of many more; and then reciting the products of their faith in a cluster of them, with only just mentioning them, was admirably suited to give us the more striking and affecting view of the efficacy of faith, as it appeared in these various fruits of it, and was found among so many believers; leaving it to our own thoughts to enlarge upon them as in the paraphrase.

my of the *Midianites*, consisting of an hundred thirty-five thousand; in confidence of God's promise of victory, which was miraculously obtained only by the blowing of trumpets, breaking of pitchers, and carrying lamps, and giving a shout, according to the divine command, saying, *The sword of the Lord and of Gideon*. (Judg. vi. 14, 25,—27. and vii. 17,—25. and viii. 10.) And the faith of *Barak*, who, depending on God's promise by the prophetess *Deborah*, obtained with only ten thousand men a glorious victory over the vastly superior and formidable army of *Jabin*, the *Canaanitish* king, commanded by *Sisera*. (Judges iv. 4, 7,—16.) And the faith of *Samson*, who, being the judge of *Israel*, believed the Lord would be with him when his spirit came upon him, as a spirit of might and courage, and enabled him to slay thirty *Philistines*, and afterward, three thousand of those enemies to the state and to God himself, at his death. (Judges xiv. 19. and xvi. 27,—30.) And the faith of *Jephtha*, who believed that God, who had delivered *Israel* from other enemies, and whose spirit came upon him, as a spirit of courage, would drive out the *Ammonites* before him; and the Lord delivered them into his hands, inasmuch that they were entirely subdued. (Judges xi. 23,—33.) And the faith of *David*, the man after God's own heart, and the most excellent king of *Israel*, who in times of the greatest danger trusted in the promises of God to bring him to the throne; and all along afterward, generally speaking, to his dying day, maintained a firm and humble dependence upon the Lord to fulfil his covenant with him. (2 Sam. xxiii. 1,—5.) And the faith of *Samuel*, that eminent prophet, who believed that there should be a performance of every thing which had been told him from the Lord, whether in a way of judgment or mercy, and that miracles should be wrought in confirmation of it, which accordingly came to pass, (1 Sam. xii. 16,—25.) And the faith of other holy prophets, too many to be particularly specified, which is recorded in the writings of the Old Testament, both with relation to the great things that some of them *did*, and others bravely *suffered*, under the power of it.

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

33 As to what great things *they did*, Some of them, by means of their faith, which animated them in the cause of God, reduced many nations into subjection to *Israel*, according to the promises made to them; such as *Joshua*, who subdued all the kingdoms in *Canaan*, and *David*, who subdued the *Moabites*, *Syrians*, and *Edomites*, and other nations round about. (*Josh.* viii. 1, 2. and 2 Sam. viii. 2, 6, 11, 12, 14.)

14.) Others of them, from a principle of faith, not only performed acts of moral righteousness in their private capacities, but also ruled righteously in their public characters, as did *Samuel*, while he judged *Israel*, and could appeal to the people for the equity and impartiality of his government; (1 *Sam.* vii. 15, —17. and xii. 3.) and *David*, who in his public administration discountenanced every kind of iniquity, cut off all wicked doers, and set his eyes upon the faithful of the land, that they might dwell with him and serve him. (*Pf.* ci. throughout.) Others of them, by means of their faith in the promises, which God gave them of his remarkably appearing for them, and doing great things by them*, obtained the *actual accomplishment* of those promises. Others of them, through faith in God, as the only living and true God, defeated and put a stop to the rage of devouring lions, as *Daniel* did, when, for his fidelity to his God, he was cast into the lions den, but suffered no harm; (*Dan.* vi. 22, 23.) and as *David* slew one lion, and *Benaiah* another. (1 *Sam.* xvii. 35, 36. and 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 20.)

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

34 Others of them, by means of their faith, as trusting in the Lord, and committing themselves to his sovereign disposals in the discharge of their duty, restrained and bound up the force and fury of flaming fire, as effectually for their own preservation from it, as if it had been actually quenched; an eminent instance of which we have in the three young men, *Shadrach*, *Mesbach*, and *Abednego*, who, for their resolutely refusing to worship the golden image which *Nebuchadnezzar* had set up, were cast into the *burning fiery furnace*, seven times hotter than it was wont to be made, and, after having continued for some time in it, they came out unhurt; inasmuch that *not a hair of their heads was singed*. (*Dan.* iii. 13,—27.) Others of them, through faith in the divine protection, as attending the use of proper means, retreated, and got away from the reach and power of the sword of cruel tyrants, who sought to destroy them, as *Elijah* did from *Jezebel*, when she swore that she would take away his life. (1 *Kings* xix. 2, 3.) Others were recovered from sickness, as *Hezekiah* was, (2 *Kings*

N O T E.

* The promises here meant seem to relate to particular promises, which were made on special important occasions to several persons, such as those to *Joshua*, *Gideon*, and others, that they should gain remarkable and complete victories over the enemies against whom God sent them; and to *David*, that he should be raised to the throne of *Israel*; and so their obtaining the accomplishment of the promises of this sort is no way inconsistent with its being said, *ver.* 39. that *they received not the promise*: For that relates to the grand promise of God's raising up the *Messiah*, which was not fulfilled in their days.

(2 Kings xx. 1,—7.) or being weak in themselves, and in comparison with the forces of their enemies, were nevertheless, through faith in their God, surprisingly strengthened to maintain their ground against them, and even to overcome them: They grew amazingly courageous, bold, daring, and successful in battle; instances of which we have in *Gideon*, (see the paraphrase on *ver.* 32.) and in *David*, who trusting in the name of the Lord of hosts, slew *Goliath*, the monstrous champion of the *Philistines*; (1 Sam. xvii. 45,—51.) so that, contrary to all human probability, they, in the strength of their faith drove their enemies back, and forced the numerous armies of the nations of strange languages, and of different manners and religion, to flee before them.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

35 As to the *weaker sex*; Even pious women, by means of their faith, had their dead children miraculously restored to them by a resurrection to the present life again, as in the case of the widow of *Zarephath*, whose son was recovered from death to life by the faith of *Elijah*, whom she believed to be a prophet of the Lord; (1 Kings xvii. 13,—24.) and the *Shunamitish* woman, whose son also was brought to life from the dead, by the faith of *Elisha*, and that according to her faith. (2 Kings xiv. 18,—37.) All these are eminent instances of the noble achievements of faith, in the great things that were done, and the rich advantages that were obtained by it. And its power and efficacy is no less conspicuous in what others have been enabled to bear and suffer with holy fortitude, by means of their faith. Many believers were so strengthened and animated by their faith, as to endure the greatest tortures with exemplary patience, for the sake of a good conscience. They freely submitted to the severest torments, even unto death, by various methods of cruelty, (some of which shall be pointed out, *ver.* 37.) as soon as we have taken notice (*ver.* 36.) of another sort of trials that were sustained by faith.) These noble martyrs courageously endured the most exquisite punishments to the loss of life itself, and bore up with heroic faith and patience under them*; they rather choosing to submit

N O T E.

* Tortured may refer, not to any particular sort of punishment, that was inflicted, different from those exemplified, *ver.* 37. which, as every one knows, must needs have been, most of them at least, extremely tormenting. And I rather choose to take it in this light, than to have recourse, with the generality of interpreters, to the *Apocryphal* books

for instances of some peculiar sort of tortures; since all the other instances, referred to in this catalogue, might be collected from the authentic Scriptures of the Old Testament. (See Mr. Hallet's supplement to Mr. *Pairce*, whom I have followed in many of the particulars here referred to.)

submit to the worst of them all, than to accept of a release from them upon any dishonourable terms, as having in view and hope a blessed resurrection to eternal life, which is incomparably better than any deliverance in this world from the greatest pains of death that could be inflicted upon them; and is every way better than a resurrection to a temporal life, which the sons of the two good women, but now referred to, received by means of the faith of their respective mothers, and of the two prophets.

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, yea moreover, of bonds and imprisonment.

36 There were others of the faithful *Israelites*, who endured several trials of their faith in various ways, though not unto death; such as scornful, ludicrous insults, and ignominious derisions, (*ἐμπαιγμῶν*) which cannot but grate upon generous minds, like those that *Isaac* met with from *Ishmael*, and *Elisba* from the rude and saucy children, or young men of *Bethel*. (*Gen. xxi. 9.* and *2 Kings ii. 23.*) And others underwent the severe discipline of being unmercifully beaten and abused for their profession of, and adherence to their God; such as our Lord refers to, saying, Some, that were sent to the *Jews*, were *beaten* or scourged: (*Mark xii. 3, 5.* *.) Yea, over and above all this, there were some, who, for the same glorious cause, were enabled, by their faith, to bear with patience the heavy chains and fetters that were put upon them, and all the hardships of being thrown into jails and dungeons; such as *Joseph*, *Samson*, *Micaiah*, and *Jeremiah*. (*Gen. xxxix. 20.* and *xl. 3.* *Judges xvi. 21.* *1 Kings xxii. 27.* and *Jer. xxxviii. 15.*)

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented:

37 As to those that were tortured to death, not accepting deliverance, (*ver. 35.* see the note there) some of them, through the steadfastness and lively exercise of their faith, gave themselves up to be stoned to death for their religion; such as *Naboth*, (*1 Kings xxi. 13.*) and *Zecbariah*, the son of *Jehoiada*, (*2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.*) and those referred to by our blessed Lord. (*Mat. xxiii. 37.*) Others of them cheerfully underwent the cruelty of an execution, by their bodies being sawn through the middle †, a barbarity that was

NOTES.

* Trial of *scourgings*, (*μαστίγων*) is indeed a different word from that which is rendered, *Mark xii. 3, 5.* *beat*, and *beating*; (*ἰδύκων* and *δεσποτικῶν*) but they are sometimes used promiscuously, one for the other. (See, and compare the Greek in *Matth. x. 17.* and *xxiii. 34.* *Mark xiii. 9.* and *Acts xvi. 37.*)

† In this manner *Jewish* tradition (according to the *Babylonish* and *Jerusalem Talmud*) says, the prophet *Isaiah*

was put to death by the order of King *Manasseh*, who was a wicked and inhuman, as well as an idolatrous prince, as appears from *2 Kings xxi. 5, 6, 16.* And *Jerom* on *Isa. lvii. 2.* speaks of it as a most certain tradition, that *Isaiah* was sawn asunder with a wooden saw. *Justin Martyr* also, in his dialogue with *Trypho*, (p. 349. *Paris edit. 1636.*) taxes the *Jews* with having expunged a passage out of the Old Testament, relating

was too often used among the ancients. (2 Sam. xii. 31. and 1 Chron. xx. 3.) By the near prospects of such terrible deaths, as well as by various other trials, many confessors and martyrs were sorely tempted to deny their God, and worship idols, which (had they complied with the offers of their enemies) might have saved them from those calamities: But, through the vigour and steadfastness of their faith, they rather chose to suffer the worst that men could do to them, than to be guilty of such an abominable sin. Some of them, who continued faithful to their God, notwithstanding all the alluring and menacing attempts of the wicked to drive them away from him, were cut off by the sword of tyrants; such as the holy prophets of the Lord by the sword of *Jezabel*, (1 Kings xix. 10.) and *Uriah*, the son of *Shemaiah*, who was slain by the sword of king *Jehoiakim*. (Jer. xxvi. 20.—23.) And there were some noble confessors, who, though not put to death, were subjected to the greatest hardships in life: They were not permitted to have any settled abode; but were forced to skulk about, like vagabonds, from place to place; some clothed with sheep-skins, and others with goat-skins, or rough garments with the wool or hair upon them, to keep them warm, and defend them against the inclemency of the wind, cold, and rain; such as the garments that *Elijah* and *John the Baptist* wore, (1 Kings i. 8. and Mat. iii. 4.) and they were contented with such mean covering, as being deprived of all other common conveniences and comforts of this life, as *Elijah* was; (1 Kings xvii. 6, 7. and xix. 4.—7.) and being pressed with many difficulties, and very ill-treated by various sorts of abuses, (αποπειρωτοι) as *Moses*, *David*, and multitudes of others were.

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy :) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth.

38 They were looked upon, and dealt with by their enemies, as though they were the pest of their day, not fit for human society, or to be suffered to live upon earth; but, in reality, they were in themselves, and in God's account, such excellent persons, that the wicked men of this world did not deserve to have so great a blessing among them, as their holy conversation and admonitions, warnings and prayers might have been to them: In judgment therefore to them, as well as for the trial of their own faith, they, under the permission, direction, and care of divine providence, wandered about from one place to another for safety, in obscure and solitary parts of the wilderness, like *Elijah* who fled

NOTE.

to the death of *Uaiab*, whom they cut in sunder with a wooden saw. And therefore this is the instance of that kind of death which the apostle is most generally thought to refer to.

fled for his life from the cruel hands of *Jezebel*; (1 Kings xix. 3, 4.) and in uninhabited mountains, like *David*, who fled for his life from the persecutions of *Saul*, while he hunted him, as *one does a partridge in the mountains*: (1 Sam. xxiii. 14,—26. and xxvi. 20.) And sometimes they were forced to betake themselves to holes and caverns of the earth, the usual receptacles of wild beasts, to hide themselves from the wilder rage of blood-thirsty men, as *David* did to the cave of *Adullam*, (1 Sam. xxii. 1.) and as an hundred prophets of the Lord were hid in caves by *Obadiah*, and as *Elijah* concealed himself in a cave to escape the fury of the wicked *Jezebel*: (1 Kings xviii. 4. and xix. 9.) But their faith supported them under, carried them through, and made them victorious over all these severities and hardships.

39 And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

39 And all these ancient saints and servants of God, as was said in our entrance on this discourse concerning them, (*ver.* 2.) have received an honourable testimony from him (*μαρτυρησιν*) in their respective generations, and in the infallible records of the sacred oracles, that are handed down to us, relating to the signal obedience, sufferings, and achievements, which they were animated to by means of the steadfastness and lively exercise of their faith, which not only realized, and trusted in the promises and providence of God, with respect to their particular circumstances; but many of them, at least, relied upon the great promise of the Messiah, which they embraced by faith, and had the benefit of, for the salvation of their own souls; and yet never received the actual accomplishment of this promise itself*, so as to live to see the exhibition of Christ in the flesh to fulfil the work of redemption, and introduce all the glories of the gospel-state, that depended upon it, and were consequent to it.

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

40 The reason why God in his infinite wisdom, and sovereign pleasure, did not fulfil the promise of the *Messiah* in their days was, because he had a foreview to, (*προβλεψαμεν*) and has accordingly provided for us, who believe in Christ as now actually come in the flesh, this better thing †, than they were favoured

N O T E S.

* The *promise* here intended, I take to be the eminent and all-comprehensive promise of Christ, which was made immediately after the fall to our first parents, and afterward to *Abraham*, relating to his seed, in whom all nations should be blessed. This promise, because it was frequently repeated to him, I called the *promises* that he received,

ver. 17.; and this was the grand promise, in which all the promises of grace center, and on which the faith and hope of the Old Testament-believers rested, and which the apostle seems to have had much in his eye in several of the fore-mentioned instances.

† I can by no means think, as some would persuade us, that the better thing provided

ed, with in their state of nonage under that preparatory dispensation, to the end that, (*ma*) as the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh to God; (chap. vii. 19.) to their state of religion, worship, and privileges, (*Luke x. 24.*) might not be perfected without the exhibition of Christ in the flesh, which they desired, and we now have been favoured with; nor without his blood, righteousness, and grace, which appear in all their light and glory under the gospel-dispensation, that ensued upon his coming for our redemption and eternal salvation, as well as theirs, that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we might be saved even as they. (*Acts xv. 11.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a noble grace, and how extensively useful is faith! It as certainly believes the reality even of invisible things, merely upon a divine testimony, as if it had ocular demonstration of them; and as effectually gives the objects of hope an existence in the mind, as if they were actually present. And what an honourable testimony has God given in his word to the faith of the Old Testament-saints for the encouragement of ours, who live under a dispensation of much clearer light and grace! The record of his accepting *Abel* and his offering, as presented by faith with an eye to the atoning sacrifice of Christ, points us to the only way of a sinner's acceptance, as righteous through faith in him, and so he, being dead, still bears witness to this important point. What high favour does God shew to faith-

N O T E.

provided for us, relates to our souls being received into heaven, upon their leaving the body, which they suppose the believers, who lived before the coming of Christ, were not admitted to; but that their death was a state of insensibility. They accordingly interpret those passages, that speak of their being no remembrance of God, nor praising him in the grave, and the like, as meant of the whole person, which may very naturally relate only to the body, much in like manner as the resurrection from the dead, at the great day, signifies only the resurrection of the body, and not of the soul. And surely the Psalmist expected an admission to heaven immediately after his death, when he said, (*Psal. lxxiii. 24.—16.*) *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart fails; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.* And Solomon, speaking of death, said, *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.* (*Eccles. xii. 7.*) Accordingly *Moses*, who was not translated as *Enoch* and *Elias* were, but died, (*Deut.*

xxxiv. 5.) appeared with *Elias* in the mount of transfiguration, (*Matth. xvii. 3.*) which was before the death and resurrection of our Lord, when, as these gentlemen fancy, he awakened the souls of all the good men that had died before him. Christ also in the days of his ministry spake of the angels having carried *Lazarus* into *Abraham's* bosom, when he died. (*Luke xvi. 22.*) And he argued from God's calling himself the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*, that they were then living in their souls, as well as should have a resurrection in their bodies to eternal life; since God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for they all live to him, which supposes a continual living existence of their souls in a state of happiness. (See *Luke xx. 37, 38.* and the note on *Mat. xxii. 32.*) And our apostle says, in the chapter before us, *ver. 16.* They desired a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. (See the note there.) This therefore cannot be the better thing that he has prepared for us; but it must relate to something more peculiar to the gospel-state.

ful believers, while he executes righteous judgments on the ungodly world! Unless we realize him by faith as the only living and true God, and as in Christ the gracious rewarder of those that earnestly seek him, it is impossible for us to please him. And how justly are they condemned and destroyed, like the old world, who, notwithstanding all God's warnings and long-suffering, persist in their iniquities! But as to those who, like *Enoch* and *Noah*, walk with God, as heirs of the righteousness of faith; and, like *Abraham*, readily obey his commands, when he calls them to leave all earthly kindred and enjoyments, and resign themselves up to his disposal, He, in performance of his promises, sometimes works wonders of providence for them, and will surely give them an eternal inheritance in the glorious heavenly city of immoveable foundations, which they are seeking and looking for, and God himself is the builder of, and has prepared for them. They may indeed expect to meet with great trials, in the way, though not equal to that of *Abraham*, when he was ordered to offer up his only begotten son. But what sweet supports does faith give under them? And how loose should they sit from this world, as pilgrims and strangers upon earth, that are desiring and travelling toward heaven as their proper home, and incomparably better country than any on earth! While faith looks at the blessed recompence of reward, it fortifies us against the fear of man, and all the terrors of death; and makes us choose Christ, and even a suffering lot with his people, rather than all the riches, honours, and pleasures of this transitory world, in hope of a resurrection to eternal life.—With what sovereign grace, does God give faith to some of the most infamous characters, like *Rahab* the harlot, and save them, while others, like the rest of the people at *Jericho*, are left to perish for their disobedience and unbelief! How numberless, and in a manner, endless are the instances of the power of faith for exemplarily suffering, as well as doing great things, with strength and courage, in the name of the Lord! And how different is God's account from that of ungodly sinners, concerning eminent saints! Though the wicked and profane think them not worthy to live, God often thinks them too great blessings to continue long among them. And how much greater helps have we to our faith under the New Testament-dispensation, than Old Testament-believers had for theirs! Christ, and all the blessings of the gospel, are now exhibited in their full light and glory, that we might enjoy the most perfect state of gospel-worship, privileges, and advantages on earth, till the whole scheme of divine wisdom and love shall be finished in heaven. Then we, together with Old Testament-believers, shall be perfected for ever. O may the strength and activity of our faith exceed theirs, in proportion to our richer means and advantages! And may we die, as well as live, in vigorous exercises of it!

C H A P. XII.

The apostle, from the preceding account of the faith of Old Testament-believers, under all their difficulties, exhorts the Hebrews to constancy and perseverance in faith and patience, under all their trials and afflictions; and, still further to encourage them thereunto, sets before them the more eminent example of Christ, and the gracious design of God in all the sufferings they endure, 1.—13. Recommends to them peace and holiness, and cautions them against acting a profane part, like Esau, in despising spiritual blessings, 14.—17. And enforces his argument by a consideration of the much greater excellency of the New, than the Old Testament-dispensation, 18.—29.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, S I N C E therefore, from the foregoing instances of the excellency and power of faith to support under, and triumph over all difficulties and dangers, it appears that we are surrounded with authentic records

nesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

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of vast multitudes of believers*, who unite in their testimony to the duty and rich advantage of relying entirely upon the infinite wisdom, power, faithfulness, and goodness of God, according to his word, how great soever their trials and afflictions were, Let us in imitation of, and animated by, their memorable and encouraging example, as though they were looking on, as eye-witnesses of our behaviour†, be like racers, who strip themselves for running; Let us, in the exercise of faith and self-denial, *cast off the works of darkness*, (Rom. xiii. 12.) and all inordinate affections to, and cares about the things of this world, and lay aside all observances of the ceremonial law, that entangling yoke of bondage, and every thing else that would be a clog upon our holy profession, and a heavy damp upon our spirits, and hindrance to our progress in our Christian course and tendencies heaven-ward; and let us endeavour with full purpose of heart, by divine grace, to disentangle ourselves from the power of original corruption, and of every sin, which, either through natural constitution under our native depravity, or through our peculiar circumstances, company, and situations in life, we are most liable and exposed to, and in danger of being overcome by, and which is ever at hand (*επιμαρτυροῦν*) to embarrass and hinder us in our spiritual concerns; and especially the great sin of unbelief, which is the root of all apostacy, (*chap. iii. 12.*) and stands in direct opposition to that eminent faith, which, as has been shown, (*chap. xi.*) our famous ancestors exercised upon all occasions, and particularly when they were called to *do and suffer* the will of God in the most trying instances: And, being thus disencumbered from every load,

N O T E S.

* A cloud as Grotius, Dr. Owen, and others have observed, was a metaphor often used by ancient writers to signify a great multitude; and we have instances of its being so used in the sacred Scriptures, as in *Isa. xlv. 22.* and *Isa. 8.* and *Ezek. xxxviii. 9, 16.* It may be taken as a strong figurative expression of great companies, in allusion to the innumerable drops of water that are collected together into a thick and refreshing cloud; and, perhaps, the allusion may be to the cloud of glory that encompassed Israel, and was a shining light to them in the wilderness.

† Here, and in the remainder of this verse, is an evident allusion to the custom of those days, in which, among other exercises, races were wont to be run; and they that were engaged there-

in, took care to have as little weight to carry as possible, and to put off all such clothes, as by their weight, length, or otherwise, might incommode or hinder them in their course. (See the note *1 Cor. ix. 24.*) It is notorious that these sorts of public exercises were very frequent in the Grecian and Roman games, which the Hebrews could scarce be ignorant of; and, in imitation of these, Herod Agrippa had, before the writing of this epistle, built a theatre and amphitheatre at Jerusalem, and instituted public games to be celebrated with great magnificence, in honour of Claudius Caesar, who advanced him to the kingdom of Judea. (Vide Joseph Antiqu. lib. xv. cap. 8. sect. 1. et de Bel. Jud. lib. 1. cap. 2. sect. 8. edit. Hudf.)

load, and hindrance, from temptation without, and corruption within. Let us lay ourselves out, in the exertion of our Christian principles, unto an exercise of persevering fortitude, quietness, and patient resignation to the holy and sovereign will of God, under our manifold sufferings; and hold on our way, in running with speed, steadiness, and vigour, till we finish our course of faith, and of the affliction, and unreserved obedience, which is appointed to us of God, and marked out in his word, and in the example of the forementioned worthies, together with the glorious issue of it, that we may *press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* (Phil. iii. 14.)

a Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 In running this Christian-course, as ever we would finish it well, Let us, like racers that look forward, be continually (*αφορμας*) looking off from sin, and self, and the allurements and terrors of this world, and from every thing that would pull us back and dishearten us; and be looking forward by faith to Jesus, the suffering Saviour, that we may derive grace and strength from him, to enable us to follow his most perfect pattern, who is not only a matchless example, but the efficient Cause, (*αρχηγος*) Leader, Conductor, and Captain of our faith, to begin it in us, and to encourage, increase, carry on and perfect it, and at length to crown it with all its blessed fruits and effects, in virtue of his meritorious sufferings and death; who had an assured prospect of the great and glorious things that should be brought about thereby, and were the rejoicing of his soul; (*John xiii. 31, 32.*) such as the satisfaction of divine justice, and the advancement of the glory of all God's perfections, and of his law and government, with united harmony, in the reconciliation and eternal salvation of the many sons that he should bring to glory; as also of his own personal exaltation, when he himself should be crowned with glory and honour; (*Heb. ii. 9, 10.*) all which were proposed to him, for his encouragement and reward, in the eternal covenant between his Father and him, and in the promises and prophecies answerable to it: (*Isa. liii. 10.—12.*) In the foreview, faith, and hope of all this joy, he calmly submitted to, and with astonishing meekness and patience endured the agonies and lingering pains of his crucifixion; (*see 1 Pet. ii. 23, and Luke xxiii. 34.*) and, with a truly heroic greatness of soul, he overlooked all the ignominy and reproach of that scandalous sort of death, and all the taunts and jeers which attended it; and thought of them with sovereign contempt, as not worth regarding, though he was therein exposed

to

to open shame, as if he had been the most despicable, as well as infamous of criminals. And now, in consequence, and as the just reward of all this, he, in that very nature, in which he suffered, is exalted, as a triumphant conqueror over sin, Satan, and the world, death and hell, to a state of perfect rest from all his former sufferings and disgrace, and to the highest honour, dignity, and authority; which, to speak in a figurative way, may be called his sitting down at the right hand of the throne, where God the Father illustriously shines in all his glory. (See the note on *Act. vii. 55.*)

3. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

3. To help you therefore against discouragements under all your tribulations and apprehensions of danger, ye ought carefully to consider, reflect upon, and compare all circumstances, (*αναλογισαμεν*) relating to the person of Christ, and his extreme sufferings, together with the invincible patience and undisturbed composure of mind, with which he bore up under, passed through, and triumphed over, all the opprobrious opposition, and cutting blasphemous insults, that the most malicious and wicked men belched out to his very face, against his holy and divine person and office-authority, doctrine and miracles, all the days of his public ministry, and especially towards, and at his death: Ye ought also to compare these with their glorious fruits to himself and to you, and with the infinite disproportion there is between you and him, and between the worst that ever did, or can come upon you, and the inexpressibly more severe and complicated trials that met upon him. Let all these things be weighed and set in opposition one to the other, (*ισταμεν*) to the end that ye may not sink and fail, be tired out, and lose all patience and firmness of mind in your holy profession, so as to think it an irksome task; much less to throw it up, by reason of the troubles and afflictions, that may befall you for his sake, who so willingly sustained all this for yours.

4. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

4. Though the violent seizure of your goods, and the loss of liberty and property, which ye have cheerfully resigned for the sake of Christ, in hope of a better inheritance in heaven, (*chap. x. 34.*) are indeed very trying to flesh and sense; yet it ought to be considered, that this, and all your other persecutions hitherto have been so far restrained by the indulgence of Providence, as not to cost you your lives, or the shedding of your blood, as they did many of the Old Testament saints before mentioned, and your great Lord and Master himself, in their conflicts with the adversaries that opposed them, and tempted them, as yours do you, to sin against God. It would there-

fore be a dangerous, as well as shameful cowardice for any of you to flinch, and desist from your Christian course, on account of the lesser difficulties and losses which ye meet with, (*αγωνισμοις*) in contending against sin and sinful men, as antagonists who set themselves, like combatants, in opposition to you, and strive to defeat and foil you; as, in contests for victory, one endeavours to do against another.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.

And can ye be unmindful of *, as they certainly are who faint under their trials? Or are ye, like them, so insensible and inadvertent, as not to remember, and be affected with that gracious and encouraging exhortation, which is directed to, and (*διαλεγεται*) reasons with all and every one of you, who are true believers, as with persons under the endearing relation and character of the children of God, in which he, as your heavenly Father, speaks with all tenderness by *Solomon*, which is applicable for your direction, caution, and comfort under every tribulation? (*Prov. iii. 11.*) My heaven-born and adopted son, who art the object of my peculiar care and affectionate love, have a care, on one hand, of slighting or taking no notice of, or being not suitably affected with the corrections which the Lord your God and Father sees fit, in the disposals of his wise and holy providence, to lay upon you for your (*παιdias*) instruction: Far be it from you to treat them with neglect and contempt, as if no good could be answered by them; or to behave like a stubborn, hardened, and incorrigible child, under his father's chastening for his faults, to reclaim and reform him, as though you resolved to take your own course, and would neither bow under, nor hearken to the rod, and who has appointed it. (*Micah vi. 9.*) And, on the other hand, as you should seriously consider, that, whoever be the instruments of your troubles, God has a holy, sovereign, and over-ruling hand in them, and has wise and gracious designs in appointing and permitting them; so you ought to take heed, lest, through impatience, fretfulness, or misconstructions of his dispensations, and the workings of unbelief, you shrink and be disheartened, to the neglect of duty; or despair of relief, and refuse to be comforted under his reproofs.

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

For what the Lord does herein, is so far from being a token of his hatred of you, (as fainting souls are apt to conclude against themselves) that, on the contrary, your being exercised with it, and patiently bear-

NOTE

* Ye have forgotten the exhortation, rendered interrogatively, have ye forgotten? according to a different pointing of the *gotten*? And both senses are taken into sentence, which is arbitrary, may be the paraphrase.

bearing it, may be justly construed and improved into an argument of his great kindness for you, that iniquity may not be your ruin, according to what immediately follows in *Solomon's* admonition, (*Prov. iii. 12.*) where he says of those, for whom the Lord has a special favour, as for his own dear children, He for wife and holy reasons exercises them, more or less, with various afflictions, not in a way of law-wrath, for the satisfaction of his justice, which is born by Christ for them; (*ver. 2.*) but in a way of fatherly chastisement for their iniquities, in order to their being purged from them; (*I. a. xxvii. 9.*) and he lays the rod of correction (*μαστιγος*) with the heavier hand, when there may be occasion for it, upon every one, whom he receives into the relation of a son, and whom he accepts, and takes care of, as such, that he may prepare him for, and, at length, receive him to himself in a better world.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

7 So that, if ye be not only visited with; but are also enabled, with faith, patience, and perseverance, humbly to submit to, and bear up courageously under such afflictions of any sort, as God in his providence permits, or orders, or measures out unto you, He therein (*προς παιδας*) presents himself to you, not in a hostile manner, like an enemy, but with a benevolent disposition and design, like a kind parent, who has your truest welfare at heart; and only takes the same course with you, as a prudent father uses, and indeed ought to go into, in dealing with his own children: For where is the son, whom an earthly father, that is good, wise, and faithful, does not correct, with due moderation, for his faults, to reclaim him from them, when he observes that they loudly call for it? And where is the child of God, in whom there is nothing offensive that needs mending, and whom his heavenly Father does not seasonably chastise, that he may not, like foolishly fond parents, spare the rod and spoil the child, when, in his infinite wisdom and love, he sees that there is need of it for answering some valuable purposes of his own glory, and its spiritual improvement, while it is in this imperfect state, and training up for heaven?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

8 But if, notwithstanding all that is amiss in you, and your remaining propensity to evil, ye were to be indulged with uninterrupted ease and prosperity in the world, without any rubs in your way, or any mixture of troubles, as the corrective and instructive chastenings of the Lord, with which all his children, even the most eminent of them, have been, are, and will be visited one way or other, though in different degrees; and if ye have not been brought to submit

to this wholesome and needful discipline of his family, ye might then justly be looked upon, and indeed would be dealt with in a way of divine neglect, as a spurious brood, and not the true genuine sons of God, and heirs of the eternal inheritance, *who are chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world:* (1 Cor. xi. 32.) For he says of the false-hearted professor, as he did of backsliding Ephraim, *he is joined to idols; let him alone.* (Hol. iv. 17.)

9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?

9 It may also be of use for you further to consider, in what a better manner, with what superior authority, and to what better purpose, the chastenings of your heavenly Father are managed, than those inflicted by earthly parents, that ye may be more submissive to him, than, as in duty bound, ye ever were to them therein. It is a common case with us all, that, in the days of our minority, our fathers, from whom we derived our frail, corrupt, and mortal bodies, as they were the instruments of begetting them, and by whose care and expence, under divine providence, we received all things for their support and comfort, took occasions to correct us for our misdemeanors; and we had, or ought to have had, such a sense of their authority over us, as to shew a reverential and dutiful regard to them, by bowing, and yielding to their paternal discipline for our instruction, and correction; and by submitting to the rod, confessing our crimes, and taking heed not to offend them any more, nor to love them, or think they loved us, the less, because they corrected us: This certainly became us*; and is there not much higher reason for us to own the supreme and sovereign authority of our heavenly Father, who is *the God of the spirits of all flesh*, (Numb. xvi. 22. and xxvii. 16.) as he is the immediate Creator, Preserver, and Governor of our rational and immortal souls, and renews them by regenerating grace? Shall we not meekly and patiently submit to his fatherly chastening for our

NOTE.

* The antithesis between the *fathers* *came a living soul.* (Gen. ii. 7.) And, of our *flesh*, and the *Father of our spirits*, shows, that our earthly fathers are only the instruments of the generation of our bodies, and that our *souls* are not extruded, or by derivation from them; but that they are created by the immediate power of God, and infused into the body, from age to age, as *the soul of our father Adam* was in his production, when God *formed his body of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man be-*

came a living soul. (Gen. ii. 7.) And, as to the souls of his descendants, *the breath of the Almighty has given them life;* (Job. xxxiii. 4.) they are the *souls that he has made;* (Isa. lvii. 16.) he is also spoken of in the present tense, as the God who *formeth the spirit of man within him;* (Zech. xii. 1.) and Solomon, speaking of death, says, *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return to God, who gave it.* (Eccles. xii. 7.)

our iniquities, and be ashamed of them, grieved for them, and concerned at heart, that we may offend him no more; but may maintain an humble reverence of him, and an affectionate obediential subjection to him, with grateful acknowledgments of his love and favour, even in his chastenings; and so may live in holy communion with him, and devotedness to him here, and for ever with him in glory hereafter? This is infinitely more to our advantage, than any submission to the corrections of our fleshly fathers could be.

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

10 For truly some of them chastened us, during the little while of our minority, in an arbitrary way, through humour, passion, pride, or weakness, without duly aiming at our good by it; and even the wisest of them, who meant well, and acted according to the best of their fallible judgment, might mistake the proper seasons, or measures of their reproofs and punishments; and the benefit we reaped by them was only, at most, for the short season of this transitory life: But our heavenly Father, who is a God of unerring wisdom and judgment, and of the tenderest compassion, never exercises his authority in correcting us, while we are in this imperfect state, which is a sort of nonage, but in due proportion, and when he knows it to be best for us; he ever designs, and one way or other promotes, our spiritual and eternal benefit by it, that all the fruit may be to take away sin, and make us more and more conformable to his own holy nature and will in this world, till we be wrought up to a sinless perfection in the world to come. Shall we not therefore *humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time?* (1 Peter v. 6.)

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

11 Now, though it must be acknowledged, and may, perhaps, be objected against the benefit of divine corrections, that no affliction, though but in the castigatory way, is desirable for its own sake, or can be considered as pleasant in itself, or agreeable to flesh and blood and carnal reason, while we are under it; but is in its own nature, as a chastening, very irksome, and sometimes very distressing and hard to be borne, especially when we consider it as a token of God's displeasure for sin: Yet, in the judgment of faith, and in after-reflections upon it, and by an attending and consequent sanctified use of it, it produces peaceful and comfortable fruits of a spiritual and holy nature, which are evidences of our state of peace with God; through faith in the righteousness of Christ, (Rom. v. 1.) bring peace into our own souls, and promote a peaceable temper towards others; (1/. xxxii. 17. and James iii. 18.) and which make us wiser and

and better, more humble under a sense of sin, more watchful and prayerful, more circumspect in our walk, more weaned from this world, and more spiritual, holy, and heavenly-minded, than ever we were before. When we are trained up by them, and learn in that instructive school, to bear them with faith and patience, with due submission to, and reverence of our heavenly Father, with serious inquiries, wherefore he contends with us, and with an exercise of every other grace, that is suitable to the nature and design of afflicted circumstances, the advantage, which results from them, is vastly an over-balance to the pain and sorrow of undergoing them; and, whatever we thought while they pressed sorely upon us, we may, after we have been exercised with them, and come to reflect upon them, say with *David*, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes*; and *thou, O Lord, in faithfulness hast afflicted me.* (Pl. cxix. 71, 75.) And hereafter, when we get to heaven, we shall clearly see, and abundantly reap the rich advantage of them all.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

12 Since therefore these are the gracious ends and benefits of God's chastening you, do not give way to dejection or dispondency under them, like persons who, through faintness in running a race*, (*ver. 1.*) hang down their hands, which are tokens of weariness, drooping, and sadness; and the joints of whose knees shake and smite together through weakness, fear, and dismay; (*Nabum* ii. 10.) And take heed of being disheartened, or of disheartening one another under the sufferings that befall you; but, on the contrary, encourage yourselves, and each other in the Lord your God, to hold on in his ways, like persons that lift up their hands with alacrity, joy, and triumph; and when any are fearful and faint-hearted among you, look well to yourselves and your fellow-Christians, that ye be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, as knowing that your God will come with vengeance to your enemies, and with recompence of good to you, and will save you. (If. xxxv. 3, 4.) A belief of this, and a courageous behaviour correspondent to it, will be like strengthening the weak hands, and confirming the feeble knees.

Iii 2

13 And,

NOTE.

* Here seems to be an allusion to *racers*, who appear to be either faint, or vigorous in running, according as their hands hang down, and their knees are feeble, or not: And the exhortation in this and the next verses may be considered as directed to the *Hebrews*, with a

reference either to their care about themselves, or about their brethren; the last of which seems to be most immediately intended in the passage here quoted from *Isa.* xxxv. 3. where it lies thus. *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the*

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.

13 And, that afflictions may be suitably improved, and not lost upon you, see that, like levellers of the road for travellers and racers, ye, by a close adherence to Christ, and by a conversation becoming the gospel, remove all obstacles out of your own and your brethren's way to eternal life, that both ye yourselves, and they may walk uprightly, and run steadily in the paths of truth and holiness, and may make the word of God your only rule of faith, worship, and obedience, that it may be a *light to your feet, and a lamp to your path*, (Ps. cxix. 105.) and all your ways may be directed to keep his statutes; lest those of you, who are ready to halt, and to be misled in their Christian-course, through temptation, darkness, and fear of sufferings, and through the cunning craftiness of such as lie in wait to deceive, be perverted and turned aside from Christ and the gospel, and from the paths of righteousness and peace: But let it, on the contrary, be your great concern, that your own souls, and the souls of your fellow-Christians, may be relieved under all spiritual infirmities, discouragements, and fears; and may be restored to a right mind, and to strength and vigour in the good ways of the Lord, and kept steadfast in the profession, faith, hope, and holiness of the gospel.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

14 In order hereunto, Let it be your constant care, and earnest endeavour, to pursue the things which make for peace, in civil and religious society, as far as is consistent with truth and holiness. (Rom. xiv. 19.) Run eagerly after it, even when it seems to flee from you; and do your utmost by all lawful means to obtain it, that, if possible, ye may live peaceably with all men, (Rom. xii. 18.) whether they be *Jews or Gentiles*, Christians or heathens, friends or enemies, and such as persecute you: And, together with peace, be sure to follow after holiness, in daily applications to the throne of grace for it, and in the use of all other means of helping you forwards in it: Whether ye can succeed in your attempts for peace with men or not, study to promote universal purity of heart and life, in conformity to the image and will of God, as in others, so particularly in yourselves; which is absolutely necessary to salvation, and without a conscientious regard to which, together with peace, no man, whatever be his profession or pretences, can be fit for, or in the very nature of things capable of, or according to the constitution of the gospel ever be admitted to, the beatific vision and enjoyment of the blessed and holy God of peace; or to be with the holy Jesus, the Prince of peace, to behold his

13 Looking diligently, lest any man fall of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled:

his glory, and to be made completely happy in his immediate blissful presence, where he is seen as he is.

15 This is a matter of so great importance, that it behoves every one of you carefully to inspect your own principles, temper, and conduct *, and to have a watchful eye over one another; lest any of you, or of your brethren, be contented without, and through slothfulness, carnality and unbelief, rest, or come short, or be destitute of an interest in the special favour of God, and of a real work of heart-changing grace, and so be not what he appears to be; and should apostatize from the profession of the gospel. This ye ought to be deeply concerned about, for fear lest any apostate, or principle of apostacy; or any corruption in doctrine or practice, that is offensive to God, and pernicious to yourselves, and will prove bitterness in the end, like gall and worm-wood, (*Deut. xxix. 18.*) should sprout forth, and discover itself, like a branch springing up from its root, and should infect and pervert any of you to his own loss and damage, and to the grief and trouble of others; and lest, by means of its malignant influence, many among you should be corrupted in their minds and manners, since *a little leaven leavens the whole lump*, (1 Cor. v. 6. and Gal. v. 9.) which would mar the beauty, purity, peace, and order of the whole church; and, unless such persons were to be cast out of it, they would be like poisonous herbs growing in a garden, which are not only full of destructive qualities themselves, but might taint others that are planted near them: And as one sin naturally runs into another, and wicked men wax worse and worse, ye have need to be very careful to put a stop to the first beginnings of apostacy.

16 Take

NOTE.

* The word (*ἐπιμενέτε*) here rendered *looking diligently* signifies, and in 1 Pet. v. 2 is used for discharging the office of a *bishop*, or *overseer* of the church, in watching over its principles and manners. Were we to take it in that sense, the exhortation in this place is to be considered, as directed to *pastors*, that had the rule over them, and watched for their souls. (*Chap. xiii. 7, 17.*) But as this epistle is directed to the body of professing *Hebrews*, who are all along in this context, and through the whole epistle, spoken to; and as no address, as far as I have observed, is made to the officers of the church in any part of it; I therefore rather apprehend, that this passage relates to the *brotherly and charitable care* which the *members* of the

church ought to have for one another, and to their mutually inspecting or watching over the spirit, temper, and behaviour, of their fellow-members, as well as over their own hearts and ways, lest any of them should, contrary to their holy profession, be *destitute*, or *come short of the grace* of God, as the word (*υστερον*) sometimes signifies, *chap. iv. 1. and xi. 37. and Rom. iii. 23.* And at others, *to lack, to be in want, or not to have, and come behind*, as in *Matth. xix. 20. Mark x. 21. Luke xv. 14. and xxii. 35. John ii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 7. 2 Cor. xi. 5. 9. and xii. 11. and Phil. iv. 12.* But it is never used for *falling from*; and so can give no countenance to the notion of *falling from grace*.

16 Left there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

16 Take heed lest there should be found any one, who makes a profession of Christ's name among you, that through the power of unbelief, and of unsubdued lusts, and the allurements of vice, addict himself to whoredom, whether adultery, or simple fornication, which is directly contrary to that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, (*ver.* 14.) and which persisted in, and not repented of, would certainly exclude him from an inheritance in the kingdom of God; (*1 Cor.* vi. 9. *) or lest any of you should at length so far degenerate, as to become an impious wretch, that makes a jest of, ridicules and despises the sacred doctrines, duties, ordinances, and blessings of divine revelation, and renounces them all, through fear of suffering for them, or through an inordinate affection to this world; in like manner as *Esau* made light of, despised and quitted all claim to his birthright; insomuch that, for the sake of satisfying his present hunger, he sold and resigned to his brother *Jacob* all the sacred, as well as civil privileges, which were annexed to it; and that for so trifling a price as a little parcel of food, which consisted of a piece of bread and a mess of pottage, (*Gen.* xxv. 29.—34.) and was sufficient

N O T E.

* A fornicator may signify any person that is guilty of unlawful embraces, whether in a single or married state. Accordingly this word is often translated *whoremongers*, inclusive of adulterers, *Eph.* v. 5. *1 Tim.* i. 10. *Rev.* xxi. 8. and xxii. 15.; and fornication is sometimes used in a like wide extent. (See the note on *1 Cor.* v. 1.) This is a sin against our neighbour, as well as against ourselves; and so is a transgression of the second table of the law: And *profaneness* is a sin committed immediately against God and religion; and so is a breach of the first table of the law.—But it is matter of dispute among interpreters, whether *Esau* was guilty of fornication or not; some of which consider the reference here made to him, only as an instance of a *profane* person: And what is said of him, in the close of the verse, seems to favour this thought, as that only relates to his *selling his birthright*, which contained, or had annexed to it several valuable privileges, some of a temporal, and others of a spiritual nature. (See the note on *chap.* xi. 20.) The temporal-privileges were dominion over the younger brethren, and a double portion of the paternal inheritance, as appears from *Gen.* xlix. 3. *Deut.* xxi. 17. 9.) and *1 Chron.* v. 1, 2. Accordingly,

when *Isaac* had given the birthright to *Jacob*, he said to *Esau*, *I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren I have given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him.* (*Gen.* xxvii. 37.) And as to spiritual privileges, though there are different opinions about them, and we may not be able to pronounce with certainty what they were; yet it is reasonable to suppose that there were some of this nature; because the *first-born* carried a typical representation of *Christ*, who is called the *first-born among many brethren*; (*Rom.* viii. 29.) and the inheritance of eternal life is spoken of as the privilege of the *first-born* in our context, *ver.* 23. And unless some privileges of a spiritual nature pertained to the birthright, it seems not to be very obvious why *Esau* should be called a *profane person*, on account of his selling it; nor how this instance would have come up to the apostle's design in cautioning the *Hebrews* against a contempt of the *gospel*, and of its spiritual privileges and obligations: For a *profane person* (*βέλλος*) is one who treats sacred things with *irreligious contempt*, and is ranked among the most flagitious and ungodly sinners. (*1 Tim.* i.

sufficient for only a meal at one eating. (*Gen. xli. 17.*) The consequence of which was very tremendous and irretrievable.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

17 For ye, being conversant with the Holy Scriptures, according to your duty and daily practice, cannot but be familiarly acquainted with the history of *Esau*, as there recorded; and must needs know, that when he afterwards, under dreadful surprize, came to see and reflect upon the folly, loss, and mischief of the bargain he had made, as it affected his temporal dignities, (though there were no signs of sorrow for his *sin*, and of repentance toward *God*, or of seeking his favour, and begging that he would grant him repentance unto life) he would fain have regained the birthright, and the patriarchal blessing annexed to it, which he had so inconsiderately, and indeed wickedly parted with: But as he was disapproved of *God*; so his petition to his father *Isaac* was utterly rejected: For *Esau* could find no disposition in the heart of his father *Isaac* to revoke the blessing, which he had prophetically, under divine influence, though unwittingly to himself, pronounced upon *Jacob*; nor could he by any means prevail upon his father to change his mind, and reverse his sentence; instead of which he confirmed it, saying, *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.* (*Gen. xxvii. 23.*) It was now too late for *Esau* to procure any alteration of it, though he solicitously begged it, not of *God*, but of *Isaac*, with the greatest importunity and concern, and with floods of tears crying, aloud, *with a great and exceeding bitter cry, saying, Bless me, even me also, O my father.* (*Gen. xxvii. 34, 38.*) This ought to be a solemn caution to you, as it will be equally impossible for any professors of *Christ's* name, that despise the grace of the gospel, and turn apostates, to be ever brought to sincere repentance, and to an inheritance of its privileges and blessings, which they with a wicked mind have renounced, notwithstanding all the proofs they have had of the truth of Christianity, as has been declared; (*chap. vi. 4, —6.* see the not there) and *God* will never reverse his sentence of condemnation on them, though, when they come to feel its terrible effects at death and judgment, (if not before) they will bitterly lament their deplorable condition, and cry out for relief.

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto

18 Take heed that ye do not fall short of the grace of the gospel, and think lightly of its blessings, which are incomparably better than ever were enjoyed under the Old Testament, as has been shown at large, in the main argument of this epistle; and have a care that ye do not revolt from Christianity to *Judaism*:

For,

blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

For, to begin with an account of the *Jewish* dispensation, Ye, in the gospel-state of worship, are not called and led, as your fathers were, to enter into covenant with God, and approach his sacred presence, according to the awful and tremendous appearances of his majesty on mount *Sinai* in *Arabia*, (Gal. iv. 25.) which, in opposition to the spiritual nature of the gospel-church, signified by mount *Sion*, (ver. 22. see the note there) was of an earthly, material substance, capable in itself of being touched, or felt after a corporal manner, though all such touching it, by man or beast, was forbidden, while the tokens of the divine presence were upon it at the delivery of the law, (ver. 20.) and while it was amazingly touched, moved, and shaken by the power of God; (Ex. xix. 20. Ps. lxxviii. 8. and civ. 32.) which might be an emblem of that dispensation, as *carnal, earthly, and moveable*: (ver. xxvii.) Nor are ye come to the fire that burnt (*καυωσάντων πυρί*) on the mountain, as though it were all over in a flame, out of the midst of which God spake unto *Israel*, (Deut. iv. 11, 12. and v. 22, 23.) which may be considered as an emblem of the *terribleness* of that dispensation, and of the justice of God, who is a *consuming fire to sinners*, according to the strict tenor of that fiery law: (ver. 29. and Deut. xxxiii. 2.) Nor are ye come to the gloomy and horrible darkness, that covered mount *Sinai*, by means of the thick cloud of smoke which arose from, and was mingled with, the flashes of fire that burned upon it; (Deut. v. 22,—24.) which may be considered as an emblem of the *darkness* of that dispensation, through which the carnal *Israelites* could not look unto, and true believers themselves had but obscure conceptions of, the way of pardon and deliverance from deserved wrath, and of that salvation which was to be brought in by the promised Messiah: Nor are ye come to the dreadfully tempestuous thundering, lightening, and earthquake, that were in the mount at the giving of the law; (Ex. xix. 16, 18. and xx. 18.) which may be considered as an emblem of the *severity of its curse*, and of the terrors of an awakened conscience, under a sense of guilt, and fear of the punishment that is due to the transgressors of it:

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

19 Nor are ye summoned to appear before the divine majesty, amidst those terrible representations of him, as your lawgiver and judge, by an exceeding loud and awful alarm, which made the *Israelites* tremble, and which, *waxing louder and louder* for a considerable time, still further awakened their fears, and may be compared to the strong sound of a trumpet, (Ex.

(Ex.

(*Ex. xix. 16,—19.*) like what will be heard at the resurrection of the dead to the judgment of the great day of account: * (*1 Cor. xv. 52.*) And then followed the promulgation of the law in the audience of the people, by a terrible articulate voice, which distinctly pronounced, in their own language, the words contained in the ten commandments; (*Ex. xx. 1,—17.* and *Deut. iv. 12.*) which solemn declaration of this holy and righteous law, in all its strictness and extent, made such a terrifying impression on the minds of them that heard it, and filled them with such a sense of guilt and obnoxiousness to divine wrath, that they earnestly begged of *Moses* to interpose, as a mediator between God and them, and communicate his mind and will to them; and deprecated God's speaking those awful words to them, and demanding their obedience, in such an immediate and terrible manner any more, lest they should die. (*Ex. xx. 18, 19. Deut. v. 5, 23, 24, 25. and xviii. 16.*)

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.

20 For they were conscious to themselves that, through the weakness and depravity of nature, they were utterly incapable of coming up to the sanctity and strictness of these commandments and prohibitions, and of being justified by their own imperfect obedience to them; and they knew not how to bear up under the dreadful appearances of God in the manner of his publishing them: And so severe were his injunctions, as expressly to command, that, if any one, during this solemnity of the divine presence, should break through the bounds, which he had set round about the mount, and should touch so much as the border of it, whether it were a man, or even a beast of any kind, he should not live, but should surely be stoned to death, or pierced and slain with an arrow, javelin, or dart; (*Ex. xix. 12, 13.*) which was an awful indication of the great distance that creatures are to be kept at from God, by reason of sin; and of his being inaccessible

N O T E.

* *This sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words,* appear to have been formed by the ministry of angels: For they are spoken of, as to be sent with the great sound of a trumpet at the end of the world, *Mat. xxiv. 31.*; and the law is said to be given by the disposition of angels, and ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator, meaning *Moses*, and to be the word spoken by angels. (*Acts vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. and Heb. ii. 2.*) And yet, as the trumpet, which shall be sounded at the last day, is called the trump of God, *1 Thess. iv. 16.*; so the voice, by which the law was

delivered, is represented as God's answering *Moses* by a voice, (*Ex. xix. 19.*) and it follows, (*chap. xx. 1.*) that God spoke all these words; and, referring hereunto, *Moses* said to *Israel*, *The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of words; and these words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount—with a great voice.* (*Deut. iv. 12. and v. 22.*) By comparing these things together, we may suppose that the Lord made an immediate use of the ministry of angels, in a supernatural utterance of both the sound and the words.

inaccessible to sinners, according to the tenor of the law; as also of the vengeance that he will execute upon the transgressors of his commands.

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake) 21 Yea, so astonishing, shocking, and dreadful was the appearance (*το φαντασμενον*) of the awful tokens, by which the immediate presence of the divine majesty was evidently manifested to be on the mount, that even *Moses* himself, notwithstanding all his eminent sanctity, and his office of a mediator to declare the mind of God to the people, and his frequent converses with him, was struck with such terror and consternation at it, as he dwelt in mortal flesh, and had still the remainders of a body of sin, that he could not forbear crying out, at the first sight of it, I am all over seized with an affrighting astonishment and dismay, and with horrible trembling. So cloudy and tremendous was the mount *Sinai* dispensation of the covenant, which concealed its most delightful glories, and engendered a bondage frame of spirit, (*Gal. iv. 24.* and see the note on *chap. viii. 6.*) that it may well take you off from all thought or desire of returning to the *Mosaic* law, the amazing terrors of which ye are not now called unto.

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, 22 But, instead of being summoned to approach unto God under such dreadful representations, as were made at mount *Sinai*, which was of an earthly and corporeal nature; ye, on the contrary, are called by the

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* *Moses's saying, I exceedingly fear and quake*, is not to be found in the history of God's awful promulgation of the law at mount *Sinai*, nor in any other part of the Old Testament: But it was, probably, a well-known and received tradition among the *Yerus*, and, perhaps, recorded in some of their writings then extant, like the names of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, two famous magicians of Egypt, which the apostle speaks of, *2 Tim. iii. 8.*: and therefore he might with good propriety mention this to the *Hebrews*, who were well satisfied, in one or other of these ways, about the truth of the fact; and it is highly probable that *Moses* expressed these words to God, when, as we are told, *Exod. xix. 18, 19.* Mount *Sinai* was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly; and when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, *Moses* spake, and God answered him by a voice. But as what *Moses* spake, or what God answered him by a voice, is not there recorded, it is most likely to have been then that he said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*; and that God comforted him against his fears by the voice which answered him: For it is added in the next verses, (*20, 21, 22.*) that the Lord called *Moses* up to the top of the mount, and *Moses* went up; and the Lord said unto *Moses*, Go down and charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish, &c. Whereupon, *Moses's* fear being allayed, he afterward said to the people, Fear not, &c. *chap. xx. 20.*—However, we may depend upon the certainty of what the apostle says about *Moses's* fear, since he, who wrote under divine inspiration, has asserted it, which he would not have done had it been a falsehood. Traditions thus confirmed by apostolic authority may safely be received by us; though no regard is to be paid to Popish traditions, which have no such warrant, and are generally stuffed with the most fabulous, anti-scriptural, and incredible stories.

God, the heavenly
Jerusalem, and to
an innumerable
company of an-
gels,

the gospel to a milder, sweeter, and more encouraging dispensation of light and grace, and of incomparably more excellent, and advantageous privileges and blessings; and are brought, through the faith of Christ, into a happy and holy communion with the New Testament-church, which is of a spiritual nature; * and, in opposition to mount *Sinai*, may be called mount *Sion*, as, like the mount which bore that name, it is chosen and beloved of God; the place of his delightful residence and special manifestation of his favour; the seat of divine worship and ordinances in religious assemblies; and the object of all his gracious promises; *the perfection of beauty, and the joy of the whole earth*, as was said of that holy place. (*Pf.* xlviii. 2. and l. 2.) It may also be styled *the city*, which is formed into a numerous, beautiful, and orderly society, and endued with glorious privileges and immunities, by the charter, and under the protection and defence, laws and government of God himself, who erected it by his gospel and Spirit upon Christ, as its foundation, and is the proprietor of it; and who, in opposition to all the idols of the heathen, is the only living and true God, and dwells in this holy city to animate it with his gracious presence, and take effectual care of it, that all its true members, who are free denizens, may live to him here, and with him in all his glory for ever hereafter: This city of God, considered in opposition to the earthly *Jerusalem*, is of a *heavenly* nature, as its constitution and original, and the birth of all its spiritual inhabitants are from heaven; as it is compacted together in heavenly peace and harmony by the bonds of faith and love; and as its spirit and temper, and all its tendencies are towards heaven, and shall issue, and

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* What is contained in this and the next verses, is not to be considered as a description of the privileges and blessings of the *future state* of the church in heaven; but of its *present state* on earth under the gospel-dispensation, which the apostle opposes to that of the Old Testament: For therein lies the force of his argument to shew the preference of the gospel-state, beyond that under the law, and to guard the *Hebrews* against apostatizing from Christianity to *Judaism*. But, in allusion to the characters under which the church of *Israel* was represented, he speaks of the gospel-church, as *mount Sion, the city of the living God, and the heavenly Jerusalem*, which are all terms of much the same import, and are applied in Scripture to the New Testament-church of true believers, of

which the church of *Israel* were types. Thus it is called *Sion, and the city of God*, Isa. ii. 3. and Psal. lxxxvii. 3, 5; and *Gentile-believers* are called *fellow-citizens with the saints*; (*Eph.* ii. 19.) and, in distinction from the earthly *Jerusalem*, the gospel-church is called *Jerusalem, which is from above and free, and the mother of us all*. (*Gal.* iv. 26.) And believers being *come to it*, as described under these titles, may most immediately relate to the communion which they are brought into with the whole church on earth; though the following parts of the description seem more immediately to relate to the communion they have, even while they are here, with the church in heaven, and with God and the Mediator, who are most perfectly enjoyed there.

be perfected in the heavenly world. And in this state of the gospel-church, ye are admitted to a most noble and exalted communion in love and service, with ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, yea, numberless myriads of blessed and holy angels, who surround the throne of God's glory, and always behold his face in heaven; and do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word; (Rev. v. 11. Mat. xviii. 10. and Pl. ciii. 20.) and who are your fellow servants, not to be worshipped by you, but to worship God with you; (Rev. xix. 10. and xxi. 9.) and are all *ministering spirits*, not with terror, like those appearances at mount Sinai; but with love and kindness, to perform the most important offices of friendship; to be your invisible guardians in life, and magnificent convoy to Abraham's bosom at death, as they are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Luke xvi. 22. and Heb. i. 14.)

23 To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

23 And ye are brought into a spiritual and holy fellowship with the whole body of sincere believers, whether militant on earth, or triumphant in heaven, who constitute the catholic church of true and vital members of Christ, and are a much more delightful and glorious society under Christ their head, than were the general congregation of all the males of Israel, at their solemn feasts three times a-year; (Exod. xxxiv. 23. and Deut. xvi. 16.) or than the general assembly of their whole church at mount Sinai, when the law was delivered to them; and who, to allude to the birthright which Esau sold, (ver. 16. see the note there) have many privileges above the rest of mankind, as the church of Israel had that were called God's first-born, (Ex. iv. 22.) and were therein typical of Christ, and of the gospel-church as interested in him, and as the first-fruits to God and to the Lamb; (Rev. xiv. 4.) who also are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, by virtue of their union with him; and are conformed to his image, who is the first-born among many brethren, (Rom. viii. 17, 29.) and has redeemed them to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and made them unto their God, kings and priests; (Rev. v. 9, 10.) whose names, to allude to the register of the first born of the males of Israel, (Numb. iii. 40.) are, as it were, inrolled in the records of heaven, and in the Lamb's book of life, (Luke x. 20. and Rev. xiii. 8.) as those whom God has chosen, merely of his grace, before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy, and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) And in this gospel state, instead of being kept at a distance from the divine presence, as when the law

was delivered in all its terrors at mount Sinai; ye have liberty of humble boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of Christ, (*Eph. iii. 12.*) to the righteous and holy God himself, even under the character of the sovereign Lord and Judge of all mankind; who, being your reconciled God and Father, will, at his appointed day for *judging the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ*, (*Acts xvii. 31.*) vindicate the righteous cause of his saints and suffering servants, and give them a crown of righteousness, and of glory that *fadeth not away*. (*2 Tim. iv. 8.* and *1 Pet. v. 4.*) And ye are admitted to the most desirable communion, in faith, love and joy, worship and obedience, with the separate *spirits of believers* in heaven, who were righteous before God on earth, as having been justified by the blood, and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ; and whose souls *departed from*, and did not sleep with their bodies; but, immediately upon the dissolution of their mortal frame, were *present with the Lord*; (*2 Cor. v. 8.* and *Phil. i. 23.*) and there they live in a state of perfect freedom from all sin and sorrow, temptation, trouble or danger, and of perfect holiness and happiness in the vision, enjoyment, and likeness of their God and Saviour. Ye have a partnership with these blessed spirits, as ye are children of the same heavenly Father, united to the same head, gathered together into one body in him, (*Eph. i. 10.*) and animated by the same divine Spirit; and as ye are intitled to, and shall inherit the same heavenly mansions with them, and join in their hallelujahs for ever.

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

24 And the foundation, medium, and center of all this glorious communion, into which ye are brought by the gospel, lies in your being called, not to *Moses*, as a typical mediator of the Old Testament; but to *Jesus*, the only true and effectual Saviour, that ye may come by faith to him, as such, and may have an immediate free access, under a sense of all your guilt, vileness, and unworthiness, to him, who is the only acceptable and all-sufficient mediator between God and man, and has irrevocably established and confirmed the covenant of grace, as well as purchased all its blessings, in this new and best administration of it, according to what has been set forth at large: (*chap. viii. 6.—13.* and *ix. 15.—20.*) and ye have communion by faith in all the virtue of his precious blood, which was *shed for many, for the remission of sins*, (*Mat xxvi. 28.*) and is applied to your souls, by the Holy Spirit, that ye may plead it for pardon, justification, and all salvation, and your conscience may be purged by it from dead works, to serve the living God; (*Heb. ix. 14.*) and which, in allusion to *Moses's* sprinkling

sprinkling the blood of the covenant on the people, and on the book of the law, (*chap. ix. 19, 20. and Ex. xxiv. 8.*) and in allusion to the sprinklings of the blood of the passover, and of the annual sacrifices on the great day of atonement, (*Ex. xii. 21, 22. and Lev. xvi. 14.*) and to various other sprinklings for legal purification, may be called the *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*; (*1 Pet. i. 2.*) which effectually procures, and cries aloud in the intercessory pleas of the Mediator, and in the consciences of believers, when applied, and rested upon by faith, not only for better things than the blood of righteous *Abel*, which was shed by his wicked brother, and cried to heaven, not for mercy and forgiveness*, but for vengeance to come down upon *Cain* his murderer; and still *speaks* awful warnings to all others of his persecuting spirit: But the blood of Christ speaks for *absolutely* the best of things, even to his crucifiers, and to all sorts of sinners that believe in him; and it speaks for *comparatively* better things than even the blood of the *sacrifice* pleaded for, which righteous *Abel* offered by faith with acceptance to God, (*chap. xi. 4. compared with Gen. iv. 4.*) under that dark dispensation; which did not give so evident assurances of such great and glorious blessings, as are now clearly revealed in the gospel, and actually brought in by Christ, and enjoyed with rich advantage by every true believer; and as neither *Abel's*, nor any other typical sacrifices, that were afterwards appointed under the law, could possibly obtain. (*Chap. x. 4.*)

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth,

25 Since therefore the gospel-state is so incomparably more excellent, encouraging, and inviting, than that of the law; take special heed, watch and pray, and cautiously beware, as even ye value your own salvation, lest, through temptation, worldly-mindedness and

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* *Speaks better things than that of Abel.* or than *Abel* (*καγα τοῦ Αβελ*) *Cain*, and brought a curse, instead of a blessing, upon him, *Gen. iv. 10, 11.*; and so spoke for the worst of evils, instead of any good to come upon him, and upon all persecutors unto death like him. But the blood of the *sacrifice*, which *Abel* offered in faith, and was signally accepted of God, spoke for *good things* for himself, though not for others, nor with such efficacy, and to so rich advantage and extent, as the blood of Christ speaks for under the gospel-state; and so was a proper instance to shew that all the sacrifices, afterwards instituted under the law, were not so available as the sacrifice of Christ.

heaven for vengeance on the head of *Cain*, and brought a curse, instead of a blessing, upon him, *Gen. iv. 10, 11.*; and so spoke for the worst of evils, instead of any good to come upon him, and upon all persecutors unto death like him. But the blood of the *sacrifice*, which *Abel* offered in faith, and was signally accepted of God, spoke for *good things* for himself, though not for others, nor with such efficacy, and to so rich advantage and extent, as the blood of Christ speaks for under the gospel-state; and so was a proper instance to shew that all the sacrifices, afterwards instituted under the law, were not so available as the sacrifice of Christ.

earth, much more
shall not we es-
cape, if we turn
away from him
that speaketh from
heaven:

and unbelief, or through hankerings after the *Mosaic* law, any of you, either refuse to embrace, and give yourselves up unto *Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant*, whose blood speaks better things than that of *Abel*; (ver. 24.) or lest any of you, who have made a profession of his name, afterward renounce him, and so despise and reject, instead of hearing and obeying him, who now speaks to you all the gracious, endearing, and important things of the new covenant, by his word and the ministry of it, and by his Spirit in miraculous gifts to confirm it, and in the hearts of those of you that are true believers: For if the people of *Israel* did not escape vengeance, but the carcasses of many of them fell in the wilderness, who refused to hear and yield obedience to *Moses*, and thrust him from them, (*Acts* vii. 39.) notwithstanding all their high professions before of hearkening to him, (*Ex.* xx. 19.) who delivered the sacred oracles from God to them, (*Heb.* i. 1.) and spake after an earthly manner upon the earth; much more impossible is it, that we should escape the dreadful vengeance of eternal fire, if any of us who live under the gospel, which brings glad tidings of a spiritual and eternal salvation, should, through unbelief, reject, despise, and disobey him, who is the *Lord from heaven*, and personally came from heaven to set up this blessed dispensation; who also, being now ascended up to heaven, still further reveals it in all its spirituality, light, and glory, and speaks heavenly things from thence in his apostles, by the immediate inspiration of his Spirit, and by miraculous wonders of mercy and goodness to confirm them; (*1 Pet.* i. 12.) and speaks them with heavenly light and energy in the souls of true believers. It must needs be an inexcusably aggravated and destructive sin, to reject his authority in this most illustrious dispensation of his grace.

26 Whose voice
then shook the
earth: but now
he hath promised,
saying, Yet once
more I shake not
the earth only, but
also heaven.

26 Whose voice, at the delivery of the law on mount *Sinai*, was with such divine majesty, sovereign authority, and almighty power, as to cause that earthly mountain to move, shake, and tremble greatly, (*Ex.* xix. 18. and *Psal.* lxxviii. 8.) and as to make a terrible commotion by the shocking prodigies which attended it, and among the people all around; an account of which we have already related. (ver. 18.—21.)

But

NOTE

His promise of shaking not the earth only, but also heaven, manifestly relates to the great alterations that should be made by the first, and not the second coming of Christ: For in the prophecy, *Hag.* ii. 6. he said he would do it in a

little while; and the alterations which ensued upon Christ's appearing in the flesh, and not those which will be made at the day of judgment, suited the design of the apostle's argument, which was to shew the superior excellency of the gospel-state,

But now, under the New Testament-dispensation, he was to make another more remarkable and important shaking, according to his promise with respect to a better state of things in the gospel-church, (*Hag. ii. 6.*) where he says, *Yet once again, I will shake, not only the earth, as I did at the giving of the law, and setting up that dispensation, which was of an earthly nature; but in a little while, compared with the whole duration of that economy, I will also shake down the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews; which was to be fulfilled in the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and which, not merely in a natural, but especially in a figurative sense, may be called shaking both earth and heaven.*

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

27 And this manner of expressing it, *Yet once more*, evidently signifies, that there should be but one other eminent and thoroughly shaking dispensation, after the former; and that the *Jewish* state (inclusive of its political and religious constitution) should be dissolved, in which many things, essential to the legal dispensation, were made by the hands of men, such as the tabernacle, temple, and all its utensils, and were appointed of God to be continued only *till the time of reformation*, (*chap. ix. 10.*) to the end that (*now*) the glorious privileges and blessings, worship and ordinances of the New Testament-church, which are of an unalterable constitution, and are introduced instead of the former, might abide without any change to the end of the world.

28 Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve

28 Since therefore we of the gospel-church are made partakers of, and actually receive by faith, the glorious benefits of the New Testament-dispensation, which, under Christ's rule and government, is a kingdom of grace, now set up in the world, and is not liable

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pel-state, in opposition to the *Mosaic* dispensation. And *the earth* might be said at this time to be shaken, as there were great commotions in the earth at the birth of Christ, and by the miracles he wrought, and the earthquake that attended his resurrection. *The heavens* also were shaken, when the extraordinary star appeared to the wise men of the East, and a multitude of the heavenly host celebrated the praises of his birth; and when the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and God the Father declared, with an audible voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;* and when the sun was darkened at his death, and the like.—But the expressions, quoted by the apostle, may rather be ta-

ken in a *metaphorical* sense, relating to the dissolution of the church and state of the *Jews*: For the overthrowing of nations and kingdoms, is in prophetic language represented by *shaking the earth, and the heavens*, as in *Hag. ii. 21, 22. Is. xlii. 13. and Joel iii. 15.* And the *shaking of the earth and heavens*, here intended, carries our thoughts back to the mount *Sinai*-dispensation, and the gospel-church state, which had been set in opposition one to the other in the foregoing verses; (*18,—24.*) and so we are naturally led to understand by it the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, *That the things which cannot be shaken may remain;* and are called a *kingdom which cannot be shaken.* (*ver. 27, 28.*)

serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

liable to be removed, as the Old Testament-dispensation has been; but remains unalterably the same, till it shall issue in the kingdom of glory. Let us, according to the nature, provisions, and encouragements of this gospel-kingdom, which is the free effect of divine favour, and so may be called *grace*, hold it fast in our faith and profession of it*; and let us be concerned to make a careful conscientious use of all the means it affords us, for every supply, increase, and exercise of grace, by which we may be enabled to serve, worship, and glorify God in an acceptable manner, through Jesus Christ, with an humble and holy reverence of his divine majesty, and with a religious fear of him, under a sense of his greatness and glory, and of our own nothingness, sinfulness, and vileness; and of the danger of trifling with him in our approaches to him, and walk before him.

19 For our God is a consuming fire.

29 For the Lord, who is our covenant-God by visible dispensation, as we are professing Christians, and is effectually so, by special grace, to those of us who are true believers, is no less jealous for his own glory, with respect to his worship according to institution now, than he was when he gave the law at mount Sinai: (Ex. xx. 5.) And as he will still be sanctified by them that come nigh him; (Lev. x. 3.) so his righteous indignation burns against those that are not in Christ, but reject him and the blessings of his kingdom, by unbelief, and cast off his fear; and he, in the strictness of his justice, and purity of his holiness, is as terribly destructive, like a consuming fire, even to those who are his covenant-people by external profession, but are unmindful of his covenant, under the gospel, as he threatened to be to the carnal Israelites, under the law. (Deut. iv. 23, 24. and ix. 3.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How great is our encouragement to faith and patience! We have a cloud of eminent examples in the Old Testament-saints, and the brightest of all in our suffering Lord and Saviour, to animate our running the Christian race through all difficulties till it be completed. In order hereunto, Let us cast off every thing that would incumber us, and every sin that we are most incident to, and look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, for all assistances, victory, and triumph, that we may be conformable to him, who, for the joy which was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now exalted to his throne. Our sufferings have not yet been unto death, as they might have been, and were in many of the ancient worthies, and in our blessed Lord himself; and whatsoever they be, if we are the children of God, they are all wisely ordered, and graciously over-ruled.

NOTE.

* *Grace* may here be taken either for the free favour of God, or for the effect of it, in gracious qualities. And Dr. Whitby observes from the critics, that the verb rendered to have, ($\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\iota$) is often put for to retain or hold fast. ($\kappa\alpha\tau'\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\iota$.)

over-ruled by our heavenly Father, in a way of special love, for our amendment in this imperfect world. For what son is there whom the father chastens not for his faults? But O how difficult is it to steer right between desisting the chastenings of the Lord, and fainting under them! And with how much greater reverence and submission should we receive the corrections of the Father of our spirits, than can be due from children to their fathers of the flesh! Though such chastenings are in their own nature grievous, they are nevertheless profitable, to make us partakers of his holiness, and to produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness, for living to him here, and with him hereafter. How deeply concerned therefore ought we to be, that no afflictions may ever turn us aside from the way of God's testimonies, or make us halt in our holy profession; but that we may advance forward with vigour in the straight paths of truth and duty, and may be exemplary, and encouraging to others, under their fears, despondencies, and dangers! And O what amiable companions are peace and holiness! These should be unitedly pursued: But if we cannot obtain peace upon good terms with men, we should remember that holiness is absolutely necessary to the beatific vision and enjoyment of God. And how dreadful is it to fall short of his grace under a profession of the gospel! All principles and practices, that lead to apostasy, will, one way or other, be a root of bitterness, and endanger infection to the church of Christ, whenever they break out. How should we dread the first beginnings of apostasy, lest, at length, it should run into all uncleanness, and profane contempt of every thing that is sacred, like *Esau's* despising and selling his birthright, which could never be recovered! How terrible is the voice of the law, as delivered at mount *Sinai*, and as roaring in the consciences of awakened sinners! It spreads blackness and darkness through their souls; burns like a tormenting fire within them; overwhelms them like an horrible tempest; summons them, as with the sound of a trumpet, to appear at God's awful bar for judgment; and makes them dread to hear of any thing more of its rigorous terrors, which they know not how to bear. Yes, the holiest of men, like *Moses* himself, must tremble, when they think of God's infinite purity and unyielding justice, as considered only according to the tremendous revelation of them in his righteous law. But how encouraging, comforting, and glorious, are the discoveries and blessings of gospel-grace! Here deliverance from the law and all its terrors, and the richest privileges are set before condemned sinners; and believers in Jesus have free admission to all heavenly blessings with the New Testament-church: For the living God dwells after a more spiritual and excellent manner in them than ever he did in the temple on mount *Sion*, and in the beloved city of *Jerusalem*. They have delightful and beneficial communion by faith and love with innumerable myriads of holy angels; with the spirits of departed saints, which are made perfect in happiness and holiness; and with the universal church of militant and triumphant believers, whose names are written in heaven: And they have humble boldness of access to God, the Judge of the whole world, as they come by faith to him through the Mediator of the new covenant, under the sprinklings of his blood, which speaks better things than the blood, even of *Abel's* sacrifice. How should we rejoice and bless God for the gospel-dispensation, which brings us to our only remedy against the terrors of the law, and to a happy communion with God and Christ, angels and saints! This is a constitution of a spiritual and heavenly nature, and is revealed and confirmed immediately from heaven by our blessed Lord, whose voice shook the earth in delivering the law at mount *Sinai*, and who made a most excellent revolution, which may be called his shaking heaven as well as earth, in setting aside the *Mosaic* dispensation, and introducing that of the gospel-state in its stead. How firmly is this glorious dispensation of light and grace established, to continue without any change to the consummation of all things! It consists of such a spiritual church-state, with respect to its worship and ordinances, privileges and blessings, as cannot be shaken; and is a kingdom which cannot be moved. O with what spirituality and solemnity should we worship God according to this heavenly establishment! Though he is a reconciled God and Father in Christ to all sincere believers, he is a devouring fire to all neglecters and abusers of his grace, and particularly to all hypocrites and apostates. How highly therefore doth it concern us to receive, and hold fast, the gospel of the kingdom with faith and love; and to have the truth of grace in our own souls, whereby we may be enabled to serve God acceptably, through Christ, with all devotional reverence of his sacred majesty, and filial fear of offending him!

C H A P. XIII.

The apostle exhorts to the various duties of brotherly love, hospitality, Christian sympathy, marriage-chastity, contentedness with such worldly circumstances as Providence allots to us, and paying due respect to the instructions, example, and memory of faithful pastors, 1,—8. Cautions against being carried away with Jewish doctrines and ceremonies, which are fulfilled in Christ, the gospel High Priest, altar, and sacrifice, 9,—14. Adds further exhortations to duties, that relate to God, to our neighbour, and them that are set over us in the Lord, 15,—17. Desires the prayers of the Hebrews, and prays for them, 18,—21. Recommends what he had wrote in this epistle to their serious consideration: Gives them hopes of his own and Timothy's coming to see them; and concludes with his usual salutations and benediction, 22,—25.

TEXT.

LET brotherly love continue.

PARAPHRASE.

LET it be your earnest care and endeavour, that as ye have begun; (*chap. vi. 10.*) so ye may go on to maintain and cultivate an abiding and growing exercise of a brotherly and affectionate temper and behaviour, in all offices of friendship one towards another, and towards all your fellow-Christians, who are members of the same family, children of the same heavenly Father, brethren in Christ your elder brother, partakers of the same grace, and heirs together of the same glory, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, or whatsoever denomination they are distinguished by.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

2 Extend your brotherly compassion, in a special manner, to such honest religious strangers*, as are persecuted for righteousness sake, and driven from their own habitations and country; or as voluntarily go about to preach the gospel. (*Acts viii. 1. and 2 John, ver. 5,—8.*) Do not despise or neglect these, or withhold your charity from, and harden your hearts against them; but be always ready, according to your abilities and opportunities, to entertain them with liberality and friendship: Receive them into your hearts and houses; and supply them with needful accommodations and assistances of every kind. This will be an

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honour

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* Though it is indeed common humanity to shew kindness to necessitous strangers, whether they be truly religious or not, and was enjoined by the law to *Israel*, *Deut. x. 19.* as hospitality in general also is by the apostle, *Rom. xii. 13.* and *Gal. vi. 10.*; and the very *heathens* practised it in the generous and compassionate entertainment they gave to *Paul* and the shipwrecked company,

who were entire strangers to them, *Acts xxviii. 2, 7.*: Yet as this exhortation stands among those, that relate to the benevolent carriage of Christians one towards another, as such, according to their various circumstances, it is to be considered as one branch of *brotherly love*, which was to be shewn in entertaining strangers of that character.

honour to God and Christian religion, a seasonable relief to those whom his providence casts in your way; and a noble satisfaction to your own minds in reflection upon it, as it has formerly been to others: For by this generous temper toward strangers, some of our religious ancestors, such as *Abraham* and *Lot*, (Gen. xviii. 2,—8. and xix. 1,—3.) had the honour of entertaining angels*, whom, by their appearance, they then took to be only good men.

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

3 Another branch of duty, which belongs to, and is included in *brotherly love*, and which I would earnestly recommend to you, is, that as ye have had compassion on me in my bonds; (*chap. x. 34.*) so ye would bear upon your hearts, pity and pray for, tenderly sympathize with, and, as far as in you lies, contribute to the relief and comfort of, and, if opportunity offers, make friendly visits, and give all possible assistance to, those faithful professors and ministers of Christ that are cast into prison, and laid under bonds, for his and the gospel's sake: Do this, like persons embarked in the same glorious cause, for which they suffer, and that compassionate them as feelingly, as if ye yourselves were actually in like distressed circumstances with them. And I beseech you to be as mindful of, and tenderly affected towards all your fellow Christians, that suffer, if not unto imprisonment, yet, reproaches, the spoiling of their goods, and other hardships on Christ's account, or that labour under grievous afflictions and tribulations of any kind; considering yourselves, as members of the same mystical body with them; (*1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 25, 26, 27.*) and reflecting upon your own state and condition, as liable and exposed to the like trials, while ye, as well as they, dwell in mortal flesh, and have no security but that your own lot may soon be the same with theirs.

4 Let

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* If (as is highly probable) the apostle here refers to the entertainment that *Abraham* and *Lot* gave to the angels, which appeared to them in human form; one of those angels, who appeared to *Abraham*, is all along represented in the history under the title of *Jehovah*, who spoke of, and conversed with *Abraham*, Gen. xviii. 1. and xiii. 17,—22.; and so was not a created angel, but the Son of God, the Angel of the covenant. (See the note on *Acts* vii. 38.) But as he continued with *Abraham*, and only the other two angels were entertained by *Lot*, it could not have been said with propriety, in the plural number, (as has been supposed would have strengthened the argument) that some (*τινες*) enter-

tained angels, one of which was the Son of God; for *Lot* did not entertain him; and if they both had done this, it was no more than hath been said of several, who entertained our blessed Lord, while he was upon earth, under the character of a mere man, or messenger from God at most, while they did not know him to be the Son of God, or the true Messiah. Instances of which we have in the *Pharisee*, who invited him to eat with him at his house; and in two of his own disciples, who took him for a stranger, and constrained him to eat with them, while their eyes were bolden that they should not know him. (*Luke* vii. 36. and xxiv. 16,—18, 29,—31.)

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undenied; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

4 Let none cast a reproach upon the ordinance of marriage *, which God hath instituted and blessed, and given laws about; (*Gen. ii. 23, 24.* and *Mat. xix. 5.*) which Christ honoured with his presence; (*John ii. 1, — 11.*) and which was appointed by the God of nature and providence, for producing a legitimate offspring, for the harmony of families and the good of society, and for a proper remedy against all uncleanness: And provided this relation to be entered into, with the mutual free consent of only one suitable man and woman, and within prescribed bounds for preventing incestuous cohabitation, (*Lev. xviii. 6, — 18.*) it is so far from being in itself unworthy, or unlawful, that it is a very honourable state of life, in both sexes of all ranks, degrees, and professions; and is so accounted by all civilized nations: And let those who are in a state of wedlock, preserve the honour of the marriage-bed inviolated, by abstaining from an adulterous use of other men or women, and by a suitable and seasonable performance of the marriage-duty, (*1 Cor. vii. 2, — 5.*) which will put an honour upon it. But as to those who are guilty in thought or deed, (*Mat. v. 28.*) either of simple fornication in a single state, or of adultery in a married state, God will often punish them in this world; or, at furthest, will call them to a severe account, and condemn their sins, and the impenitent practisers of them, in the day of judgment, and exclude them from his heavenly kingdom. (*1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.*)

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee,

5 Another duty, which I would recommend, as of general use to you all, and of high importance to your Christian character, is, to beware of covetousness in all its degrees and various ways of working; (*Luke xii. 15.*) which are inconsistent with the forementioned duties of brotherly love, hospitality, and compassion to them that are in adversity; (*ver. 1, — 3.*)

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* There were, it seems, in those days, some that condemned matrimony as an impure and unlawful state, inconsistent with the strict chastity that is necessary to the perfection of religion: while others accounted simple fornication to be no sin; and the apostle foresaw, by the spirit of prophecy, that such like pernicious notions would be propagated in the apostacy of after-ages. (See the note on *1 Tim. iv. 1.*) In opposition therefore to both these errors, he recommends a married state, as not only lawful, but honourable, provided its ends be pursued with fidelity, and a becoming chastity of mind, to the prevent-

ing of fornication and adultery.—As the verb *substantive* is wanting in the Greek to complete this sentence, our translators and others supply it by *is*, (*151*) and so make it an affirmative proposition; and others supply it, by *let it be*, (*152*) and so make it a preceptive or exhortative proposition, just in the same manner as the next verse, (where is the same omission in the original) is rendered, *Let your conversation be without covetousness*. But as it is uncertain, in which of these ways the verb may be here best supplied, both are taken into the paraphrase.

thee, nor forsake thee.

3.) let there be no immoderate desires, or pursuits after the things of this world, in your temper, traffic, and manner of life; in setting your hearts upon them, and making an idol of them, as if they were your chief good; in being over-eager to get them, especially by any fraudulent, unjust, or oppressive means; in grudging any proper expence for the reasonable support and comfort of yourselves and families, according to your respective stations; and being loth to communicate of them, as occasions require, for the glory of God, the relief of the poor and afflicted, and the service of civil and religious interests; and in thinking it too great an hardship to part with them, when, for the sake of your profession of Christ and his gospel, your persecuting enemies would deprive you of them. All these are plain indications of covetousness; and if any man, in this sense, *love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*: (1 John ii. 15.) But, in opposition hereunto, it is incumbent upon you, as Christians, to be thoroughly reconciled to, and well pleased with your present circumstances, even the meanest and most afflicted of them, without envying the ease and affluence of others; as being fully persuaded that the things, which God deals out to you from day to day, in the way of your duty *, are better than your deserts, and are, upon the whole, what he knows to be most for his own glory, and fittest and best for you: For he, who is the Almighty, the only living and true God, whose kingdom rules over all, and whose faithfulness is unchangeable,

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* As the exhortation to Christian contentment with such things as we have, relating to the present life, is by no means to be understood to countenance sloth or idleness in our secular callings, which is every where severely reprov'd and condemn'd in scripture; so the promise of God, *not to leave, nor forsake us*, is to be considered with regard to any difficulties, or dangers, that may attend us in the discharge of such duties as God calls us to. And though this promise was made personally to Joshua on a particular occasion, (*Josh. i. 5.*) which the apostle seems most immediately to refer to; yet it is equally applicable, as a promise of God's gracious covenant, to all true believers, and may be pleaded and relied upon, by every one of them in all trials, as if it had been personally made to himself; (see *Rom. xv. 4.* and *2 Cor. i. 20.*) and this very promise, for substance at least,

was made, not to Joshua only, but likewise to Abraham, and recited for Jacob's encouragement; (*Gen. xxviii. 15.*) as also to Solomon, (*1 Chron. xxviii. 20.*) and to the church of Israel. (*1 Sam. xii. 22.* and *Is. xli. 10, 17.*) Accordingly, our apostle quotes it with an application to every individual believer, as God's saying, in the singular number, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*: And the more effectually to silence the objections of unbelief, and the more strongly to assure us, that there shall be no failure in the performance of this promise, there are five negatives, as it lies in the Greek, and may be literally rendered in the style of peremptory vehemence, *No, I will not leave thee; no, no, I will not forsake thee.* (*οὐκ ἀφήσω σε, οὐδ' οὐ μὴ στερήσω σε.*) And this evidently carries the force of a contrary strong affirmative of his being with us at all times.

changeable, like himself, has said, in a way of free and absolute promise to *Jehovah*, (chap. i. 5.) which stands on record for the encouragement of all his people in their various straits and difficulties, and equally belongs to every true believer, in the use of proper means, as if it were directed to him, by name, in all his trials, with respect to temporal, as well as spiritual concerns, Be thou assured that I will not leave thee to thyself, nor in the hands of any of thine enemies, nor in any wants or dangers; nor will I ever utterly forsake or abandon thee, at any time, or upon any account, or in any circumstance whatsoever; no, I will by no means do it; but will certainly be with thee to *strengthen, help, and uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness*, (Is. xli. 10.) all the days of thy life, and in death itself. *I will guide thee with my counsel, and afterward receive thee to glory.* (Ps. lxxiii. 24.)

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

6 So that we believing and resting upon this comprehensive promise, as applicable to ourselves, may, and ought to say with humble confidence, and sweet composure of spirit, each one for himself; and should openly avow it, with holy boldness in the profession of our faith in God, as the *Psalmist* did amidst all his dangers and distresses, (Ps. lvi. 4, 11. and cxviii. 6.) Whatsoever my straits and difficulties, wants and troubles be, the Lord *Jehovah* himself, the everlasting God, who faints not, nor is weary, is my support, succour, and defence; and having him on my side to take my part, to revive my soul with grace, and over-rule all events for my good, I will not be afraid of the very worst that the most powerful, subtle, and inveterate of all mine enemies, who are but men of weak and mortal flesh, can do against me; as though he, who is my helper, were not an over-match for them. *If God be for us, who can be against us?* (Rom. viii. 31.) And *if we be followers of that which is good, who is he that shall harm us?* (1 Peter iii. 13.)

7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto

7 As ever ye would practise the duties, and have your faith strengthened in the promises but now mentioned, see that ye pay a due regard to the memory of those deceased faithful ministers *, who were your spiritual

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* Remember them which have the rule over you, (*ἀπομνηνέσθαι τοὺς ἡγουμένους ὑμῶν*) literally translated is, Remember your guides, or leaders, without restraining it to those that had then the pastoral care of them, who are spoken of, ver. 17; and the remaining part of this verse, which mentions their having spoken to

them the word of God, and the end of their conversation, seems plainly to interpret it of former pastors, who were then deceased; and at the same time shows that their rule over them, as our translation hath it, consisted in their going before them, as their guides or leaders in doctrine, discipline, and exemplary

unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation:

spiritual guides, under Christ their great Lord and Master; and often call to mind the doctrines, commands, and promises, which they delivered to you according to the word of God; that only rule of faith, worship, and obedience. Remember them in such a manner, as to embrace, and adhere to the pure doctrines of faith, which they preached to you, and as to imitate their own faith therein, and their faithfulness in professing and publishing them, together with all the excellent and holy fruits thereof, as they appeared in their lives. And ye ought to be excited to this, by seriously reflecting upon what ye have seen, or heard, and observed of the peaceful and joyous manner with which they finished the course of their good conversation in Christ, and obtained a noble victory over, and happy exit, or outlet (*ἔξουσις*) from all the troubles and dangers that here attended them; how they then escaped from them all, and went with triumph to glory. This may well animate you to tread in their steps.

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

8 For, though some of your ministers are gone, and others are going off the stage; yet the Redeemer and Head of the church ever lives, Jesus Christ, the object, author, and finisher of your faith, is unchangeably the same in his divine person *, as from everlasting to everlasting God; and is the same in his love to his people, in his care of them, and in his offices for them, and promises to them, as their only Saviour through all generations: He ever was the same *heretofore* in the virtue and efficacy of his undertakings and performances to Old Testament-believers, and to all that have since died and got safe to heaven; and he is still the same to all New Testament-believers *now living* upon the earth; and will be the same to all *succeeding ages of them*, until the consummation of all things; and the same to them all for ever afterwards: And therefore ye ought to be steadfast

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ry conversation: And indeed *the rule* of evangelical pastors lies, not in giving laws, broaching doctrines, or exercising any authority of their own; but in explaining, establishing, and defending the laws and doctrines of Christ, and inculcating them on the consciences of his people, by his sole authority, and exemplifying them in their own faith and holy conversation, according to what they have received by their commission, and can prove that they have received them from him, as contained in his word. All pretences to church-authority beyond this, is really an usurpation, an anti-chris-

tian-lordship, instead of being entirely subordinate, as it ever ought to be, to the authority of Christ.

* There is a strong emphasis in this word *the same*; (*ὁ αὐτός*) for it is a characteristic of the unchangeable permanency of the great Jehovah of *Israel*, the *I am*, Psal. cii. 27.; and it had been applied to Christ in *chap. i. 12*; (see the note there) and considering the connection with the foregoing verse, with which the apostle brings it in here, it sets the unchangeableness of Christ in opposition to the uncertain continuance of dying ministers.

9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

stedfast in the faith, as ye have been taught; and to have the same trust and dependence upon him, as your faithful guides had, the end of whose conversation was with honour and joy.

9 Take heed then, lest, by departing from Christ *, and from the doctrines and examples of your former guides, as far as they followed him, ye, like children, be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Eph. iv. 14.) and, particularly, lest ye be fluctuating, and whirled about, like a ship in a storm, or like clouds by the wind, and be unsettled in your minds by various doctrines about several Jewish rites and ceremonies, which are different from, foreign to, and inconsistent with, the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; but which erroneous teachers insist upon, as necessary still to be observed in order to salvation. (Acts xv. 1.) Beware of being misled by these false notions: For it is every way incomparably better † that the soul, inclusive of all its faculties, be fully persuaded of, and stedfastly fixed in its dependence upon, the free love and favour of God in Christ, as revealed in the gospel for the remission of sin, peace of conscience, and acceptance with God to eternal life; and that it be fortified against all wavering about the truth and importance of this doctrine, by an experience of its efficacy in a work of heart-changing grace, than vainly to imagine that these blessings can be obtained by observances of the ceremonial law, which had a peculiar reference to, and were sanctified by the altar, and stood in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed upon the Jews, until the time of reformation; but which, as they could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; (chap. ix. 9, 10.) so they of themselves neither were, nor could be, of any spiritual and saving advantage to those who were most conversant with them, even during

NOTES.

* This, and the following verses, may be considered as founded upon what had been just before said of Jesus Christ's being the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. And the doctrines, which the apostle more particularly warned the Hebrews against, were such as related to the Jewish meats, that were under the law to be esteemed clean or unclean, and to be eaten or not, according as they were or were not to be, or had or had not been, offered on the altar; and con-

sequently extended to the sacrifices, and the whole frame of the Mosaic institution, which had a particular reference to the altar, and was sanctified by it. This gives us a proper clew for understanding the meaning of these verses, which otherwise appear to be very obscure in their connection.

† The word here rendered a good thing (ἀγαθόν) is translated better, Mat. xviii. 8, 9. and in that sense I apprehend it is most fitly to be taken here.

ring the legal dispensation ; much less can they be so now ; but, on the contrary, are very pernicious to those that have continued to keep up a religious regard to them ; the altar itself, and all the rites and ceremonies dependent upon it, being now of no further use, since all that was typified thereby is fulfilled in Christ.

10 We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle.

10 We, of the New Testament-church, have an incomparably better altar and sacrifice of a spiritual nature in Christ, *who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God* ; (chap. ix. 14.) and so was, in his own person, the priest, altar, and sacrifice too, whose divine nature supported, and gave an infinite value to his sacrifice, as the altar sanctified the gift : (*Marth. xxiii. 19.*) And this furnishes out a feast to our faith, in receiving the blessings of his purchase with application to ourselves, which they have no authority, title, or claim to be partakers of, who still abide by, and live in the observation of, the external and typical services of the *Jewish* tabernacle, to make atonement for sin ; or who, acting the part of *Levitical* priests, perform the offices of it for that purpose. (*τη σκηνη λατρευοντες*) They have no more right to feast upon this sacrifice of Christ, than even the priests themselves had to eat any part of the sin-offerings, which were to be totally consumed. (*Lev. vi. 30.*)

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp.

11 For according to the appointment of God in the law, with respect to those beasts, particularly bulls and goats for the sin-offering, (*chap. x. 4, 5, 6.*) the blood of which was carried into the most holy place by the high priest, on the great day of atonement ; it was ordered that the bodies of those sacrifices, together with their skin and dung should be burnt, and utterly consumed by fire, in some place, which lay out of the borders of the camp of *Israel* : (*Lev. xvi. 27.*) And so the priests themselves were not allowed to eat of those expiatory sacrifices, that were most eminently typical of the great propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, which he offered *when he redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us* ; (*Gal. iii. 13.*) and with the blood of which *he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us*. (*Chap. ix. 12.*) This plainly shews, that no legal services can make any one partaker of his sacrifice, which was prefigured by those, from the eating of which, even under the law, both priest and people were entirely excluded.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people

12 Therefore, for the most evident and exact accomplishment of the thing signified by those eminently typical sin-offerings, Jesus also, our great High Priest,

people with his own blood, suffered without the gates.

Priest, that he might effectually make atonement for the sins of his spiritual *Israel* *, and might consecrate them as a peculiar people to God, by shedding, not the blood of bulls and goats, but his own most precious blood, which he carried into the heavenly sanctuary. This Jesus, I say, suffered his painful and ignominious crucifixion, under the curse of the law, on mount *Calvary*, without the gates of *Jerusalem*; (Luke xxiii. 33.) which corresponded to the burning of the bodies of the sin-offering, as things devoted to destruction, without the borders of the camp of *Israel*, while they sojourned in the wilderness; which might also intimate Christ's leaving their temple, city, worship, privileges, and church-state to fall into ruins, and leaving them to perish in their iniquities, who would obstinately adhere to that constitution, and reject him, according to what he denounced when he was going out from thence. (*Mat.* xxiii. 38, 39, and *Luke* xxiii. 27,—31.)

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

13 Let us therefore, who make a profession of his name, and pretend to look for salvation by him, go forth by faith and hope, desire and love, to him; as those that place all our dependence upon him, and have all our expectation from him, and that affectionately embrace him; leaving the *Jewish* camp, and the altar and temple at *Jerusalem*, and all the legal institutions pertaining to them, behind us, as having no expectation from them, nor any further to do with them. Let us also do the like by this world, and all the concerns of it, which answer to the *political* state of the *Jews*, first in their camp, and afterwards in their city, that we may go out from all its allurements and enjoyments in our hearts and affections, and set them upon Christ, who suffered without the gates of *Jerusalem*. Let us cheerfully and boldly own him, under all the scandal of his cross; and be willing to bear the reproach of believing in a crucified Jesus, for all salvation, how much soever it may be a stumbling block to the *Jews*, and foolishness to the *Greeks*; (1 Cor. i. 23.) and let us stand ready to suffer shame, contempt, and scorn for his sake, as those who, in imitation of him, have learned to deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow him. (*Mat.* xvi. 24.)

14 For here have we

14 For as the city of *Jerusalem* itself †, which succeeded

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* *Sanctifying the people* is to be understood, not of *internal sanctification* by the Spirit, though that is purchased by the blood of Christ; but it is to be taken here, as it frequently is in this epistle, in

a *sacrificial* sense, for purging them from the guilt of sin, and consecrating them to God. (See the note on *chap.* ii. 11.)

† Here seems to be an allusion to the city of *Jerusalem*, which, though it was

we no continuing city; but we seek one to come.

we have no durable state of happiness, or of settled residence in this lower world, as if here were our rest: But as pilgrims and strangers upon earth, (chap. xi. 13.) and as persons driven from place to place by our persecuting enemies, we, who believe in Jesus, realize by faith, earnestly desire, look and long for, and, by all the ways and means of God's appointment, seek after a future and better city; a state of everlasting rest and peace, honour, safety, harmony and delight, even one of a glorious and heavenly nature, a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, who, as our God, has prepared it for us. (Chap. xi. 10, 16.)

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

In this the apostle speaks of the sacrifice of praise to God, which is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. This is the sacrifice of praise to God, which is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. This is the sacrifice of praise to God, which is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

16 But to do good, and to communicate, forget not:

ceeded the camp of Israel in the wilderness, as the seat of Jewish worship, and of all political, as well as religious interests, shall soon be utterly destroyed, according to the prediction of our blessed Lord; (Luke xix. 41,—44.) so we have no durable state of happiness, or of settled residence in this lower world, as if here were our rest: But as pilgrims and strangers upon earth, (chap. xi. 13.) and as persons driven from place to place by our persecuting enemies, we, who believe in Jesus, realize by faith, earnestly desire, look and long for, and, by all the ways and means of God's appointment, seek after a future and better city; a state of everlasting rest and peace, honour, safety, harmony and delight, even one of a glorious and heavenly nature, a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, who, as our God, has prepared it for us. (Chap. xi. 10, 16.)

15 In consideration therefore of Christ's having redeemed and consecrated us to God, by his own blood, (see the paraphrase and note on ver. 12.) Let us ascribe all possible glory to God through him, as our only High Priest, Sacrifice, and Advocate, and as the altar that sanctifies our oblations: Let us abound in daily evangelical offerings of thanksgiving and praise to God, every morning and evening; and be ready to present them to him at all times, in all circumstances, and for every thing, especially for Christ and all the blessings of his purchase; offerings, not for expiation, which is made perfectly and alone by his sacrifice; but spiritual offerings of grateful acknowledgment, which we, as a holy evangelical priesthood, are to offer up, acceptably to God by Jesus Christ; (1 Peter ii. 5.) and which, in distinction from the legal offerings of calves, bullocks, and other beasts, are metaphorically called the calves of our lips; (Hos. xiv. 2.) and, in allusion to the first fruits under the law, may be styled the fruit of our lips, as they consist of cheerful confessions that all the good we have, or hope for, proceeds from the free favour of God, which is to be acknowledged to the glory of his adorable name, not only by every one singly for himself, but with united hearts and voices, and with social celebrations of his praise.

16 But while your hearts and lips are full of gratitude and praise to God, through Jesus Christ, and on his account, for all his mercies toward you, Take heed of

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a city of habitation that Israel sought after, while they were journeying in the wilderness, and which God led them to by a right way, Psal. cvii. 7; yet that city itself was now to be soon destroyed,

together with the whole frame of its civil, as well as religious privileges; and so was a fit emblem of the fleeting, uncertain, and transitory state of this world, and of all things in it.

not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. of thinking that this is the only sacrifice of thankful acknowledgment that ye are bound to offer in return for his goodness. Be careful to cultivate a merciful, kind, and generous temper; and to abound in all acts of beneficence toward your fellow-creatures, that as ye have opportunity, ye may do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith; (Gal. vi. 10.) and may give them a partnership, or communion with you (*κοινωνίας*) in your temporal good things, by communicating to them as their need requires: For this sort of offerings, as well as praises, are to the glory of God, when presented with faith and love, and in obedience and devotedness to him, and, though not meritorious, yet are agreeable to his gracious nature and will, and well pleasing to him, (*Phil. iv. 18.*) who accepts both you and them in the beloved, in like manner as he had a respect to *Abel* and his offering, which that righteous man presented with faith in the atoning sacrifice of the promised Messiah. (*Gen. iv. 4. and Heb. xi. 4.* see the note there.)

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account: that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. 17 As ever ye would improve all appointed means of grace and ministerial assistances, for discharging the forementioned duties; see that ye not only remember to imitate the faith, and the exemplary conversation of your deceased pastors; (*ver. 7.*) but that ye pay a religious regard to the doctrines and precepts of those, who under our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, (*ver. 20.*) are, or hereafter may be your spiritual guides or leaders, (*πνευματικοὶ ἡγούμενοι*, see the note on *ver. 7.*) to conduct you in the way of truth and holiness, not as having dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your joy: (*2 Cor. i. 24.*) And let it be a point of duty with you, to yield yourselves up to Christ's authority, in them, as overseers which the Holy Ghost has set over you. (*Acts xx. 28.*) Attend upon, receive, and comply with their instructions, exhortations, admonitions, and reproofs, not with an implicit faith and obedience; but, as far as it appears, that they speak and act in the name of Christ according to his word: For as it is their proper office, business, and duty; so it is the care and concern of those of them, who understand, and are faithful to their important trust, to watch over you in the Lord, with all diligence according to the ability which he gives them, that they may inspect your principles, temper, and behaviour; may guard and caution you against all iniquity, error, and spiritual danger; and may lay themselves out in the best manner they can, to subserve the edification and eternal salvation of your immortal souls: And they engage in this momentous work with a conscience toward God, as accountable servants, that are

are daily spreading before him, in their addresses to the throne of grace, what they observe of the state of their flocks, and the fruit of their labours among them; whether it be hopeful, or discouraging; and are deeply sensible that they must give an account to their Lord and Master in the day of judgment, how far they have been successful, as well as diligent and faithful in their ministry. These solemn thoughts awaken them to the greatest zeal and care in the discharge of their duty, that they may go on in their work, and report the fruits of it to God, with cheerfulness and delight, and not with mournful hearts, while they are labouring in it; and may give up such a final account of the issues of their holy ministrations, as shall be matter of exceeding joy and triumph to them, (1 *Theff.* ii. 19.) and not of sad disappointment of their hopes concerning you: For, were this to be the case, they tremble to think that, though they themselves are *to God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish*; (2 *Cor.* ii. 15.) yet all their preaching, watchfulness, and care, would be lost upon you; and, instead of your reaping any good fruit from them, would turn to your greater condemnation and misery for ever.

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

18 We who are employed in the sacred office of the ministry, being sensible of the awfulness of our work, of the many difficulties that attend it, and of our own utter insufficiency, and need of divine assistance to carry us on in it, and to carry us through it with fidelity, comfort, and advantage, earnestly request your continual importunate prayers for us, that; whatever our success be, we may be found faithful in the day of Christ: For, notwithstanding all our sufferings, and all that our enemies may suggest to the contrary, we trust with humble confidence, that we are upright (though, alas! attended with many infirmities) in our views and labours for the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; (see 2 *Cor.* ii. 12.) and our consciences bear us witness, as in the sight of God, that we are heartily desirous and determined, through his strengthenings, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, (1 *Tim.* ii. 12.) with a due decorum, (καλως) suitable to our moral, religious, and ministerial characters, in all our behaviour toward God and man.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

19 But I more especially beg your united prayers for my direction and support, under all present trials; for deliverance from the dangers I am exposed to; and for the blessing of God upon the services I am now engaged in, that, when he has done his work by me in these parts, he would remove all difficulties out of my way, and give me a proper opportunity

of returning, and being further useful to you by my personal ministry, and of being comforted together with you by our mutual faith, (*Rom. i. 12.*) which I am desirous of, and hope will be hastened through your prayers for it.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

20 In the mean while, as I desire your prayers for me, (*ver. 18, 19.*) so I am continually mindful of you in my fervent supplications to the God of all grace, whom I address on your behalf, under the encouraging and endearing consideration of him as the God of peace, who is our reconciled God, Father, and Friend; and is the Author and Giver of peace of conscience, and peace one with another, and of all manner of prosperity in the dispensations of providence and grace, till it be perfected in an everlasting enjoyment of him; Who, in the scheme of redemption, sustaining the character of the sovereign Lord, Judge, and Lawgiver, to demand and receive the satisfaction due to divine justice for our sins, not only raised our Lord and Saviour from the dead, by an exertion of his divine power; (see the note on *Rom. viii. 11.*) but, by an act of supreme authority, legally discharged him in a judicial way, as our public head and representative; and so *took him from prison, and from judgment, and raised him again for our justification.* (*1st. liii. 8. and Rom. iv. 25.*) This he did in token of his entire approbation and acceptance of what Christ had done and suffered in our room and stead, who in his person and office, as a divine Saviour, is by way of eminence, dignity, and propriety, the great and only chief Shepherd of the dear chosen flock, which the Father had given him to take effectual care of, in the execution of all his offices, as a Prophet, Priest, and King, that he, like a good shepherd, who has a special love to, and interest in his sheep, *might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify them to himself, as a peculiar people,* (*Titus ii. 14.*) might gather them into his fold; and might feed, guide, govern, and preserve them from all dangers; defend them against all their enemies; and bring them safe to glory: All which is brought about by means, and in virtue of his blood*, which he shed to make their peace with God, who, on account of his having done this, raised him from the dead,

N O T E.

* *Through the blood of the everlasting covenant,* most immediately refers to God the Father's bringing our Lord Jesus from the dead. But some include its reference to Christ's being the great Shepherd of the sheep; and others,

to God's being the God of peace, according to the current doctrine of the Scriptures concerning him, as reconciled by the blood of Christ; and I do not see why we may not extend its reference to all the preceding parts of the verse.

dead, and gave all power into his hands, that he might give eternal life to them; he having by his precious blood purchased them for himself, and purchased for them all the blessings of the covenant of grace, and confirmed it irrevocably past appeal: (*chap. ix. 15,—17.*) And so, in opposition to the mount-Sinai dispensation of the covenant, which was of a temporary nature to *wax old, and vanish away*, (*chap. viii. 13.*) this is, strictly and properly speaking, an everlasting covenant in its constitution, and in its benefits, which, together with the covenant itself, shall abide for ever.

21 Make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 May this God of peace set to rights all the moral disorders of each of your souls, and of your whole community, and reduce them to all the regularity of hearts united to fear his name*, that ye may be thoroughly prepared, fitted and disposed, and always ready and enabled for every kind of good work, and for every act of that kind, relating to him, yourselves, and others, to perform it in a holy, spiritual, evangelical manner, from principles of faith and love, according to the rule of his word, in obedience to his command, and for his glory; and so may cheerfully, continually, and unreservedly submit to his disposing, and obey his preceptive will in all things, according to the notices he gives of both by his providence, word, and Spirit? And as ye are insufficient for this of yourselves, May he, of his good *pleasure, work in you both to will and to do*, every thing, as in his sight and presence, that bears his own image, and is agreeable to his holy nature and will, and that he observes and delights in, as the effect of his own grace, and as acceptable to him, through the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ! To him, who is the great Shepherd of the sheep†, and to the God of peace through him, (*ver. 20.*) May all possible adoration, honour, and glory, on account of what each of

N O T E S.

* The word (*καταρτίζαι*) here used, and rendered *make you perfect*, signifies to set things to rights, and reduce them to their proper state that were out of order, and to prepare them for a use which they were unfit for before. Accordingly it is rendered in other places, *to prepare, frame, fit, restore, and perfectly join together*, as in *chap. x. 5.* and *xi. 3.* *A body hast thou PREPARED me.*—*The worlds were FRAMED by the word of God.* And the apostle speaks of *vessels of wrath, FITTED to destruction*, *Rom. ix. 22.* of *RESTORING such as are overtaken in a fault*, (*Gal. vi. 1.*) and of being PERFECT-

LY JOINED TOGETHER *in the same mind.* (*1 Cor. i. 10.*)

† It may be somewhat uncertain, whether this *doxology* is to be referred to the *God of peace*, who is most directly addressed in this prayer, or to *Jesus Christ*, who is the nearest antecedent, and with whom it stands in the closest connection. However, as it is undoubtedly directed elsewhere, sometimes to the *Father*, and at others to *our Lord Jesus Christ*, it is due to both; and we may give it such a turn, as makes it applicable to each of these divine persons.

of these divine persons are in themselves, have been, are, and will be to us, be ascribed henceforth continually, through all the ages of time, and to an endless eternity! So it ought to be, and so we and all true believers desire it may be, and are well assured it shall be, in testimony of which we heartily say, *Amen*.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

22 And now to draw to a close, my dear brethren, whom I love, not only as my kindred according to the flesh, but especially as fellow-Christians, I earnestly beg of you that, laying aside all prejudices, ye would take in good part, and readily receive and comply with the word of exhortation and consolation, including all the instructions and cautions which I have given you in this epistle; and that ye would not think it too long or tedious: For, though it be larger than some others of my writing, I have summed up the doctrines contained in it, relating to the *Mosaic* law, and the person, offices, and gospel of Christ, in as short a compass as I well could, consistent with the vast importance of the things themselves, and your concernment in them, and with my great affection to you; as also in comparison with the much greater enlargement I could have gone into, had it seemed needful for you.

23 Know ye, that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

23 There is one thing further, which I with great pleasure would acquaint you with, as I know ye would be glad to hear of it; and that is, that our dear brother *Timothy*, who is *well reported of among you*, (*Acts xvi. 2.*) and as *a son with the Father, has served with me in the gospel*, (*Phil. ii. 22.*) is now released out of prison, and gone upon important affairs to another place*; and if, according to my present hopes, he should ere long return to me, and I should have my liberty, I purpose, by the will of God, to come along with him, and give myself the satisfaction of seeing and conversing with you, for the furtherance of your faith and joy.

24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They

24 In the mean while, I desire that those of you, into whose hands this epistle may first come, would present my most affectionate Christian love and respects to all your spiritual guides, who are set over you

N O T E.

* *Timothy* it seems had been in prison, probably with the apostle *Paul* at *Rome*; but was by this time released from his bonds, and gone to some other place, to which it is likely the apostle had sent him, as he often did to one place or another, as occasions required. But as all our times and ways are in the hands of the Lord; so we have no account that can satisfy us whether *Timothy* ever returned

to the apostle, or either of them ever went to visit the *Hebrews*, though at the time of writing this epistle he had hopes of it; and, with a due submission to the will of God, wrote his design according to those hopes. What is here said of *Timothy* confutes the *postscript*, which was added by latter hands, and speaks of this epistle, as *written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy*.

They of Italy salute you.

you in the Lord; (*ἡμεῖς*, see the note on ver. 7.) and to all your fellow-Christians, who by their regular profession are credibly believed to be what, I doubt not, the generality of them are, truly holy persons, as having been set apart by God for himself, and sanctified by his Spirit. Those of this character that are *Italians*, and are at present with me, join their Christian salutations with mine.

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.

25 To conclude with my common benediction, (see the note on *Rom.* xvi. 22.) which, for substance, I write in all my epistles with my own hand, May the free love and favour of God, through Jesus Christ, and all its blessed manifestations, fruits, and effects, ever attend all and every one of you, (whatsoever your stations be in the church, or in the world) for your growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, and for your direction, preservation, and comfort here, till ye arrive at his heavenly kingdom; with desire and hope of this, I say, *Amen*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a beauty does brotherly love cast upon churches and the Christian character! It tenderly sympathizes with, and is mindful of, compassionate and beneficent to suffering saints, and strangers among them; as being sensible that we ourselves are liable to like afflictions. But how inconsistent is covetousness with this benevolent temper! And how unbefitting the people of God to be dissatisfied with the disposals of Providence toward themselves! For he is their helper, and has promised that he will not leave, nor forsake them in any state whatsoever.—As Christian religion sets aside no law of nature, What an honourable bond is wedlock for all, whose age and circumstances incline them to it, and fit them for it! But all unclean lusts, in the single or married life, are what God detests, and will, sooner or later, punish upon those that indulge them. But what a complete Saviour is Christ; and how stedfastly should we adhere to him! He always has been, is, and ever will be unchangeably the same in himself, and to his people; and is their great High Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice too. The atonement he has made by his blood is sufficient of itself to procure their peace and reconciliation with God, and a sacred dedication of them, as a peculiar people to him; and is effectually all that to them which was typified by the sin-offering on the great day of expiation, as he suffered without the gates of *Jerusalem*, and is gone with his own blood into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for them. What a delightful and substantial feast has our faith upon his sacrifice, which they who stick to *Jewish* institutions have no right to eat of! How ready should we be to go out to him from every thing that interferes with him; to renounce all the allurements of this world for him; and cheerfully to own and honour him in all the ignominy of his cross! And being convinced of the uncertain, transitory state of all things here, Let us seek a *city* of everlasting rest and safety in the world to come.—Of what momentous consequence is the ministry of Christ's faithful servants! We should be imitators of their faith and holy conversation, who have been our spiritual guides, and finished their course with joy; and while persons of this sacred character are heartily engaged in their work, they diligently watch for the salvation of precious souls; as knowing that they must give an account of their faithful labours, which turn greatly to their own, but most of all to their hearers joy or grief, according to the good or bad effects they have upon them. Their counsels, exhortations, and reproofs, as far as agreeable to the mind and will of Christ in his word, ought to be seriously attended to, free from all prejudices, and with humble obedience and submission to his authority in them, that we may not be misled, and tossed to and fro, by the errors of wicked and designing men, who bring in

various doctrines, which are quite foreign to the Christian faith. O happy souls, that are secured against their seductions, and established in the truth as it is in Jesus, by an experience of its power, and of a work of special grace! But as ever ministers and people would be mutual blessings and comforts, they ought earnestly to pray one for the other. And how encouraging to faith in prayer is the consideration of God in a Mediator! In this view, we may realize him as our reconciled God, and the author of all desirable peace and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and may consider our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great Shepherd of the sheep, to take care of all, whom the Father has given, as a peculiar property and charge to him; and may think of the new and everlasting covenant, as ratified and confirmed by his blood, on account of which God the Father is pacified, and has raised him from the dead, as a public Head and Representative, for their justification. In humble dependence upon all this, with what holy boldness may we ask for every grace and favour that we stand in need of! As particularly that God would work all our works in and for us by his Spirit, and would enable us to offer up, with united hearts and lips, continual sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise, and to add the most benevolent distributions to the necessities of others, especially of the household of faith! These also are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, as sacrifices of grateful acknowledgment that we receive our all from him. And how cordially and affectionately should all the saints salute one another, and their spiritual guides, in a Christian manner! May the grace of God in Christ be with all his ministers and people! To whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.



